THE

HISTORY

OF

Miſs HARRIOT FITZROY,

AND

Miſs EMILIA SPENCER.

VOL. I.

THE HISTORY OF THE LIFE OF MARIOT FITZROY.

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AND

Miſs EMILIA SPENCER.

By the Author of

LUCINDA COURTNEY.

In TWO VOLUMES.

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THE HISTORY OF Miſs HARRIOT FITZROY, AND Miſs EMILIA SPENCER.

Miſs HARRIOT FITZROY, *to Miſs* EMILIA SPENCER.

I WAS extreamly diverted, my dear Emilia, with your laſt ſprightly epiſtle, and am, doubtleſs, under great obligations to you, for your endeavouring to con-

vince me that my lot is ſo uncommonly fortunate; but, my dear girl, in ſpite of all your wit and eloquence, you have not ſo clearly demonſtrated the point, but that it will ſtill bear a diſpute. Were we thoroughly acquainted with one another's circumſtances, I am convinced, we ſhould find providence more equal in its diſtributions than is generally imagined. You own yourſelf not perfectly ſatisfied with your portion of the good things of this life, and will you not, after all you have ſaid to perſuade me I am happy, pronounce me ungrateful to heaven, if I venture to make the ſame confeſſion? But it is even ſo.

What a flaming panegyrick have you compoſed on beauty! I find you reckon the poſſeſſion of that the *ſummum bonum*; but with all due defe-

rence

rence to your better judgement, I muſt pronounce you too laviſh in your encomiums. Suppoſing myſelf, as you would perſuade me, poſſeſſed of that almoſt univerſal idol of our ſex, you muſt permit me to be a competent judge in the matter: No fear, you may juſtly ſuppoſe, of a female's ſetting too ſmall a value on perſonal charms; yet, take it all in all, I ſay with the ſong—"Vain is beauty's "gaudy flower,"—and that for ſeveral reaſons. Beſides its ſhort duration, does it not generally create envy in others, and ſelf conceit and affectation in the poſſeſſor? But you will, perhaps, tell me, with the partiality of a friend, that I, at leaſt, am free from theſe laſt diſguſting foibles;—allowing it to be ſo, what ſay you to the firſt objection? Would you exchange the eſteem and complacency of your fe-

male acquaintance for a little more regularity of feature, which would convert their good will into coldneſs and reſerve? For, believe me, dear Emilia, you will meet with few generous minds like your own, that can love the perſon who rivals them in admiration.—I ſpeak from painful experience—In ſpite of the advances I make to the young ladies of our neighbourhood, I cannot bring them to that pleaſing intimacy, which is ſo deſirable. Nor is this all I have to complain of; my moſt trifling actions are ſcrutinized with the utmoſt ſeverity, and foibles, that would paſs unnoticed in others, or only as ſuch, are deemed faults in me; added to this that my ſiſter—but you know her diſpoſition, my dear Emilia. Can I then be ſo compleatly happy as you have humour-

cuſly

ouſly repreſented me? Had I leſs ſenſibility perhaps I might; but not only my heart, but my temper is too warm to paſs through life with tranquillity.

Since I have choſen, a little unluckily you will, perhaps, ſay, to make myſelf the heroine of my tale, permit me to enumerate a few more of my grievances, for it would be degrading a better ſubject to give it but the ſecond place in my epiſtle.

Can I boaſt of felicity, while I know myſelf doomed by the arbitrary—forgive me, my dear departed father, that I have ventured to condemn an action that you judged right—but, ſurely, it was deviating a little from your accuſtomed tenderneſs, when you obliged me, on the forfeiture of my fortune, to marry a man I never ſaw—a man whom, it is

a thouſand to one, I may not be able to love, when I do. Did friendſhip to *his* father demand — but let me reſtrain my pen—I ought to reverence the action of a parent—though not, perhaps, able to account for his motives, 'tis my part to obey — perhaps I ſhall have no reaſon to regret his choice, I will ſuſpend my judgment, therefore, till I ſee the object of it. Yet I much fear the free-born heart will not ſubmit its feelings to the authority of others—A little time will determine my fate—in a few months Mr. Brandon is expected to return from his travels, and then—heigh—ho—do you know I am in conſtant fears, leſt my affections ſhould give me the ſlip before he comes? If love is involuntary, as its votaries pretend, (a good excuſe for an ill-placed

placed paſſion) have I not too much foundation for my fears?

Adieu, my amiable girl—next time you would perſuade me I am happy, expatiate on our friendſhip, and tell me you love me as much as ever, then will I allow you have ſpoke to the purpoſe, for that is, indeed, the principal ſource of felicity to,

Your ever affectionate,

HARRIOT FITZROY.

Miſs EMILIA SPENCER, *to Miſs* HARRIOT FITZROY.

YOU tell me, my dear Harriot, that my laſt epiſtle diverted you; yours, on the contrary, made me ſad. Why, my lovely friend,

would you not suffer me to continue in an error that was so pleasing to me? I believed you happy, because I wished you so. Must I then awake from the dear delusion?—No, you shall, you must, for my sake, be what I so earnestly desire. Come, follow my example, I am endeavouring to commence philosopher. My system is short, and I hope, a little practice will make it easy. I give full scope to my imagination, and look only at the bright side of the prospect, making the most of every little pleasing occurrence that befalls me, and on the other hand laugh at every thing that attempts to make me uneasy, chaceing away each melancholy thought the moment it begins to intrude. Solomon—I have been studying Ecclesiastes—was a wise man you know, and he commends

mirth.

mirth. "A man," ſays he, "hath "no better thing under the ſun, than "to eat, drink, and be merry." Hang care then, we will be the laughing philoſophers, laughing *with*, and, if you pleaſe, *at* all the world.

To begin with your ſiſter in the firſt place. Poor Penelope! why, to be ſure, nature has been a little unfavourable to you—but come, don't deſpair—who knows what may happen yet?—Nay, forgive me, dear Harriot; no frowning, I beſeech you—ſee I ſtand corrected—ſhe is your ſenior—true, I had almoſt forgot that, age ſhould be reverenced, comfort her with that, and put her in mind that this prerogative will be daily encreaſing. I know how much ſhe will reliſh a hint of that nature. What a laughable mortal it is, if ſhe was not your ſiſter! But that recollection

checks my ridicule. Yet who can think of her vanity without a ſmile, when her perſon gives ſo little room for that foible? In other reſpects, ſhe does not want for underſtanding — Underſtanding! did I ſay? that is too high a compliment, her talent conſiſts rather in low cunning and diſimulation—and then her vile temper is inſufferable. It muſt be owned ſhe is an original in her way, and you know I never let thoſe characters eſcape me. Even my mother, with all due deference be it ſpoken, is as highly finiſhed a character, in *her* way, as one would wiſh to meet with.—The fit is on me, and I muſt out with it, 'tis all the revenge I can take for the miſery her perverſe humour uſed to cauſe me—*Uſed*, I ſay, for ſince I commenced philoſopher, I look upon perſons and things

in

in a different light. Tell me, for, ſince I aſſumed this new character, I am become a diſputant, and begin to make a freer uſe of my reaſon than formerly; tell me then, I ſay, do you believe—ſtay, let me try to expreſs myſelf clearly—Is there ſuch a thing as natural affection? I mean an innate—no, Mr. Locke ſays there are no innate ideas; if ſo, the love we have for our parents is acquired by habit, and flows from gratitude, for the care taken of us in our tender helpleſs ſtate, and is ſtrengthened by the affection we obſerve them to have for us. But now, ſuppoſe they fail in their part of duty, and inſtead of love, treat us with averſion; is it ſtill natural to be fond of them?—I am in doubts.

My mother—I am ſerious now, for it is both a ſerious and a painful

truth—my mother, I ſay, has given me too many melancholy proofs to doubt that I am not her averſion. Yet what have I not done to gain her affection! Alas! my levity is fled—this ſubject will not admit of trifling—'tis a misfortune that ſits heavy on my heart. But let me try to forget it, at leaſt while I am writing to my friend, for I would then be all gaity, leſt I ſhould infect her with my ſadneſs.

In a few months, you ſay, your deſtined heart is to be offered to you; hope the beſt, my dear girl. That he will love you, "all nature cries "aloud," if he has eyes and ears,—if he has not, you are freed from your engagement; for your father uſed, as you have often told me, greatly to praiſe his perſonal perfections; but if he returns to you deaf or blind, he is no longer the perſon

perſon that was deſigned for you, ſo your promiſe is null and void, as you have not yet, thank heaven, pronounced the diſmal and irrevocable words, "I take thee, Henry Brandon, "for better, for worſe;" and if your ſaid father has not been too partial in his favour, I ſee as little room to doubt your liking him. So much for your ſwain till you ſee him, and then for ſighing, ogling, and all that. You ſay you never yet was in love—I long to know how you will behave when under its influence. To ſpeak my ſentiments freely, I think life very inſipid without ſome attachment of that nature. I do not ſay I would wiſh to know that paſſion in all its violence, if it is what ſome people deſcribe it, but a moderate *tendreſſe*, for a particular object, is neceſſary to keep one from langour. Is not Rochfoucault

foucault a little too ſcrupulous, when he ſays, a woman ought never to talk of love as if it any way concerned her, if ſhe would not be taken for a coquette? Would he not then, on the contrary, have us to be prudes? But I may as well follow his advice, for why ſhould I talk of love? Your ſiſter Pen and I may as well do the thing with a good grace, ſince I am beginning to think nature has deſigned us both for everlaſting ſpinſters—we ſhould therefore wiſely cultivate a ſweetneſs of diſpoſition, (ſhe you know has a noble ſtock to begin with) that we may at leaſt be plump, cheerful old virgins, and not add to the liſt of peeviſh maiden aunts.

Adieu, my amiable friend, promiſe but to love me in whatever ſtate I am, and that will enſure my felicity.

In

In return, believe that no change can ever diminiſh my affection for you, whoſe I am,

With the greateſt ſincerity,

EMILIA SPENCER.

Miſs HARRIOT FITZROY, *to Miſs* EMILIA SPENCER.

OUGHT I not to chide you, my dear girl, for mentioning your mother with ſuch blameable freedom? Yet your behaviour to her is irreproachable, though I have with grief, but too often, obſerved a treatment in her which, on a perſon of a leſs ſenſible mind and amiable temper, would be apt to produce a contrary effect.

effect. Perſevere, my dear Emilia, in your laudable conduct—remember, that duty is a debt due from a child, not only to the kind but to the unkind parent. I approve of your philoſophy, but not of your ſcepticiſm, in regard to natural affection. Let you and I leave the grave reaſoners (who are too wiſe to act or think like the reſt of the world) to their own devices, while we aſſent to the truth of whatever is moſt likely to ſecure the general harmony. We ought to reject every thing that has a tendency to weaken the ſocial tye. The point you affect to doubt is, a generally received opinion, and has been ſo in all ages, inſomuch that in ſome countries, parents have had power even over the lives of their children, it being ſuppoſed, juſtly I would hope, that their natural affection would be

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an effectual ſecurity againſt their making a wrong uſe of that prerogative. The reſt of your ſyſtem is very well, the aſſiſtance of a lively imagination is neceſſary to embelliſh the few pleaſures this tranſitory life affords, which will but ill bear a reaſonable ſcrutiny. Laugh then, my dear, as much as you pleaſe, but let it rather be *with* than *at* others, for, to be happy, we ought to cheriſh an eſteem for our fellow creatures, on whom it ſo much depends, and ſhould be as blind to *their* faults as we generally are to our *own*, ſince the trueſt pleaſure in life is ſociety, but a ſatirical turn will ſoon render us unfit for the enjoyment of it.

What an unaccountable girl you are! Am I to believe you ſerious when you profeſs ſo humble an opinion of yourſelf? what! deſpair at eighteen?

teen? an everlaſting ſpinſter? Indeed, my dear, I prophecy a very different fate for you. Surely, you never look in the glaſs, or you would not talk at this ſtrange rate. I find I muſt attempt your picture, for your mirror is certainly falſe. Have you the conſcience to imagine that elegant form of yours, that lovely bloom, fine eyes and archly expreſſive countenance were ever deſigned to conſtitute an old maid?—Poſſitively no—if the male creatures have not loſt all feeling and diſcernment. Prepare then to communicate the paſſion you are ſuch an advocate for, whenever you chuſe to exhibit yourſelf. But where is there room for ſuch adventures, retired as you are from the *beau-monde?* In vain you are fair, while you remain unknown.—Is there as great a ſcarcity of pretty fellows in your

your part of the world as when I was laſt with you?—Alas! the country is no longer an arcadia where ſhepherds are ſeen piping under every buſh! the ſports of the green are no more! Have you not one ſingle Damon to practice on? No object to fill up the void you complain of? Rochfoucault, whom you quote in your laſt, ſays, that the pleaſure of love is loving, and that we enjoy more happineſs from the paſſion we feel than that we communicate. If ſo, your taſk is eaſy, you have nothing to do but commence *inamorata*, no matter whether you find the flame be reciprocal or not. But I much doubt the truth of his maxim. What ſay you?—I am ſent for.

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A female viſitor obliged me to leave you, my dear Emilia, ſhe is gone

and

and I reſume my pen. I don't know if you remember a Miſs Stuart—I believe ſhe was not at Derby when you favoured us with your company. She is an inſeparable friend and companion of my ſiſter's, and never two people more reſembled each other in their diſpoſition, nor are their perſons unlike. Miſs Stuart is tall and thin to exceſs; very erect, with a ſharp noſe, little eyes and ſallow complexion; jet black hair and high forehead, which, as well as the reſt of her face, looks as if ſhe enjoyed one of the bleſſings celebrated by the Pſalmiſt, "Oil to make the face to ſhine." Never were there ſuch a pair of prim damſels as Pen and her! not a pin in their dreſs but what is ſtuck with the utmoſt caution and exactneſs. When I entered the room I found our viſitor warmly expatiating on the beauties

of

of a new-faſhioned cap which ſhe had juſt received from London, and had brought to receive the approbation of her friend—She favoured me with a ſight of it too. Look there, Miſs Harriot, cried ſhe, with an air of triumph, here's taſte for you! O don't talk to her about taſte, ſaid my ſiſter, ſcornfully; poor Harriot knows very little of the matter, as you may ſee by the manner in which ſhe puts on her cloaths. I never can perſuade her to dreſs like other people, though I may ſay, without vanity, ſhe has a tolerable example ſet her. I don't know, my dear, ſaid I, ſmiling, how other people dreſs, as I ſeldom make remarks of that nature, nor am I very ſtudious about my own. I would never change the faſhion that I think becomes me, but for fear of being ſingular, for what is once becoming muſt

muſt always be ſo, till age may make it otherwiſe. And I ſuppoſe, cried my ſiſter, you have the vanity to think any thing becomes you, or you would not toſs on your things in the manner you do; but remember I tell you, that a neat woman will ever be preferred to a ſlattern, be ſhe ever ſo pretty.—Cleanlineſs is the mother of love. True, anſwered I, nobody can be a greater advocate for cleanlineſs than myſelf, nor can you juſtly tax me with a failure in that point; but I think an elegant careleſſneſs very conſiſtent with it. A perſon may be very far from a ſlattern who yet does not torture her ſhape by tight lacing, nor ſtrain her forehead by the diſpoſal of her hair. Who can help laughing at the compact little heads ſome people make themſelves! not a ſingle lock ſuffered to ſtray from

its

its confinement. Look at any good portrait—painters are allowed to be the beſt judges of beauty — how is it dreſſed? why in eaſy flowing robes, and the forehead generally ſhaded with a falling, careleſs ringlet, that gives an inexpreſſible grace and ſoftneſs to the countenance. My ſiſter ſhrugged up her ſhoulders. You have pretty romantick notions, Miſs Harriot, ſaid ſhe; it's well if you don't turn out a female quixote on our hands, I aſſure you I ſhould not be ſurpriſed at it if you did, for what better can be expected from the manner in which you ſpend your time, ſcribbling and reading for ever as you do? It would be much more to the purpoſe, I can tell you, were you to make a little more uſe of your needle. Nay, my dear ſiſter, ſaid I, I think you have no reaſon to complain of

my

my neglecting that, but would you have it the ſole employment of a woman? Are there not many other accompliſhments neceſſary to render her compleat? I don't know what you may think, cried Miſs Stuart, but that is, in my opinion, the one thing needful. Every young woman hopes, I believe, to become a wife, ſome time or other, and what then is the uſe of thoſe accompliſhments you contend for? Truſt me, ſhe will have ſomething elſe to mind; the right management of a family will afford her ſufficient employment, I'll warrant her. We differ widely in our ſentiments, ſaid I, a woman of ſenſe will never neglect her duty, and yet ſhe will find it neceſſary to be more than a mere upper-ſervant, if ſhe would ſecure the affections of her huſband. The accompliſhments I

mean

I mean are ſuch as will render her a pleaſing and entertaining companion. Fiddle faddle, cried my ſiſter, fine talking truly. I wiſh the men knew you as well as I do, you would ſtand little chance of putting your chimerical ſchemes in practice. You people who think yourſelves handſome, are ſo inſufferably conceited, there's no bearing you. Thank heaven I don't ſet up for a beauty, but am content to paſs for a reaſonable woman—Yet, upon the whole, I have no great reaſon to complain—perſons of ſenſe will generally look a little farther than the mere tincture of a ſkin, when they make choice of a wife. What ſay you, Miſs Stuart? I ſay they ought, anſwered that lady; but even men of ſenſe, are too often miſled by a ſpecious outſide, and do not ſet all the value they ſhould on

intrinſick merit. We are likly to have an inſtance of it very ſoon in our neighbourhood, for I am aſſured Miſs Vernon is actually going to be married to a man of conſiderable fortune. — Miſs Vernon! exclaimed my ſiſter, is it poſſible? What that little wax baby? But, to be ſure, the man muſt be a mere idiot that could think of ſuch a choice. No really, reſumed Miſs Stuart, I am told he is quite the contrary; though, for my own part, I am of your opinion, if one may judge of his underſtanding by his actions. And if we do, ſaid I, I ſee no reaſon to condemn him, ſince Miſs Vernon has ever been allowed the character of an amiable girl. O you are very right, cried my ſiſter, to defend a perſon who ſo much reſembles yourſelf, that's natural enough; but we were neither aſking,

nor

nor are likly to pay any great deference to your judgment. Proceed, my dear Miſs Stuart, tell me the particulars of this odd event. I know very few of them, anſwered the other; all I heard was, that the affair is determined, and that her lover, Mr. Hamilton, is now at Derby, in order to conclude the buſineſs. And have you ſeen him? cried my ſiſter. Only at a diſtance, ſaid Miſs Stuart. And what kind of a wretch is he? aſked Pen. Why, really, a very paſſable figure, ſaid the other; but he is totally eclipſed by a friend who accompanies him. Here ſhe was interrupted by the entrance of Miſs Warren.

O lord, cried that young lady, running up to the glaſs, I am in ſuch a flutter! Ah, horrid! my complexion is increaſed to the odious freſhneſs

of a milkmaid. And what, may one aſk, has cauſed all this emotion in you? ſaid Miſs Stuart.—What! heavens! I am quite out of breath—the confident wretch had the aſſurance to follow me, and then he ſtared and appeared ſo, ſo—I can't tell you how, but to be ſure he was within an ace of ſpeaking to me. One had better be a fright than ſo peſtered as I am with impertinence. But who was it all this while? cried my ſiſter. Who? ſaid Miſs Warren, no leſs than the charming wretch that is lately come from London—the moſt enchanting fellow—ſo unlike our country beaus—clowns: I ſhould more properly call them when compared to him. Such eyes! ſuch a face! ſuch an air and a grace!—Have you ſeen him, Miſs Harriot? turning to me. No, anſwered I, ſmiling; nor ought to wiſh it,

if

if he is all you have deſcribed him to be. As for that matter, ſaid ſhe, looking firſt at me, then with more complacency on her own ſweet perſon in the glaſs, you may not perhaps think ſo much of him—I am told he is, in general, very reſerved and cold in his behaviour to the ladies. I don't know how I happened to excite his attention—I cannot ſee ſo much difference between myſelf and others, but there's no accounting for taſte—Lord, my dear, again eyeing me with looks in which I diſcovered ſome envy, are you ill? I was going to aſk you to take a ſtrole with me this morning, but, to ſpeak frankly, I never ſaw you look ſo indifferent in my life. What have you done to yourſelf? I am afraid you would make but little havock amongſt the beaus, were you to go. Do you

think ſhe would, Miſs Fitzroy? O don't aſk me, cried my ſiſter, ſhe is pleaſed with herſelf, I ſuppoſe, and that's ſufficient. Perfectly ſufficient, ſaid I, Miſs Warren has, by her own account, done miſchief enough for one day, it would be too much if I likewiſe had a chance for conqueſt. Nay, don't be offended at my freedom, ſaid that lady, you know I am a giddy creature, and always ſpeak what comes uppermoſt. Nobody will diſpute your being very well at all times, I only ſay you look rather worſe than uſual. And, indeed, what ſignifies whether one is handſome or not? I don't, for my part, find that it is any ſuch mighty advantage, as ſome people would make it. There's Miſs Vernon, who, I think, nobody that has eyes, will allow to be more than barely tolerable, has yet made a conqueſt,

conqueſt, ſuch as it is. You have heard, I ſuppoſe, that ſhe is going to be married at *laſt?* Yes, anſwered I, and very advantageouſly too, I am told. Advantageouſly? cried Miſs Warren; lord, every thing is ſo magnified by common report, that there is no knowing what to believe; but I, for my part, never give credit to above half that is ſaid on theſe occaſions. I am ſure I have no reaſon to envy her good fortune, if it is ſuch, 'tis no affair of mine, Miſs Vernon is too inſignificant to be conſidered as a rival in any reſpect. This ſhe ſpoke with a ſcornful air, and again adjuſted her dreſs.

At that inſtant a ſervant entered with cards from Mr. Vernon's family, inviting my ſiſter and me to a private ball at their houſe, in the evening.

O lard, my dear creatures, I muſt leave you, cried Miſs Warren, I am ſure I ſhall find an invitation for *me* too, at home—I would not miſs going for the univerſe. I gueſs who was the promoter of this ball. Yes, yes, the caſe is clear—adieu ladies. Shall I ſee you there, Miſs Harriot? Don't let what I ſaid be any diſcouragement—I'll anſwer for it you look *aſſez bien*, for all that. Oh! heavens! it will be a joyous evening. Farewell—I have twenty things to ſettle before I go. So ſaying ſhe made her exit, and I ſoon after left the friends to a *téte a téte*.

And now, my dear, I likewiſe take my leave of you, but will not cloſe this letter, long as it already is, till I can give you the particulars of this ſaid ball. Adieu.

Miſs

Miſs HARRIOT *in Continuation.*

When I was dreſſed, which I generally am with great expedition—but I will give you the particulars of it for once, that you may judge whether my ſiſter's cenſure of it was juſt or not. My hair was in a high frized toupée, powdered too, in compliance with the faſhion, and indeed with my own taſte. All my ornaments were a black feather a little on one ſide, with a ſprig of diamonds over it, diamond earrings, a black velvet collar with diamond ſtars, a blond ruff and tucker, a roſe-white negligée ſpotted with ſilver, a ſilver tiſue petticoat, and ſhoes of the ſame. Silver blond ſtomacher and bows, pearl bracelets, a black lace, ſhort cloak, and laſtly, a ſmall noſegay of myrtle and jeſſamine in my breaſt, and, notwithſtand-

ing Miſs Warren's opinion, I thought I never looked better. Dreſſed as I have told you, I went to my ſiſter's apartment, where I found her ſtill buſily employed in that important taſk. She looked at me with attention. Would you chuſe to have your hair frized? aſked her maid. Frized? cried ſhe, with diſdain; what would you make a fright of me? Am *I* one, then? ſaid I ſmiling. That's as people may think, ſaid ſhe. Well, but really, my dear Pen, you honour me with ſome very diſagreeable compliments now and then.—O, as for that matter, child, you will meet with fools enough to flatter you without me. But may be, I prefer your approbation to theirs, ſaid I. Then you muſt take a different method to acquire it, returned ſhe. Well, but tell me, ſaid I, do you ſeriouſly diſlike my dreſs? I am not

not much given to joking, anſwered ſhe. But do as you will, you are a beauty, you know. That point is not ſo clear, returned I; but were I really one, you take an infinite deal of well-meant pains to put me out of conceit with that generally coveted perfection. O, no fear of that, cried ſhe. But I can tell you one thing, take it as you pleaſe, your conſtantly harping on that ſubject is enough to put any body out of conceit with you. Nay, my dear Pen, ſaid I, that is too ſevere; the ſubject was of your own ſtarting, and, I give you my word, I am as willing as you can be to drop it, nay will promiſe never to renew it, if you do not oblige me to do ſo. Pſha, don't teaſe me with your impertinence, ſaid ſhe, I hardly know what I am about. Why wench, what are you doing? ſnatching an egret from her

maid; what is the creature gaping at? I will leave you, said I, my presence has ruffled the usual serenity of your countenance, I hope my absence will restore it. She was going to flame out in anger, but I left her.

Above an hour did I wait before she was decorated, in the mean time, I amused myself with reading Clarinda Cathcart, a new novel that my bookseller had just sent me. I was almost sorry to be interrupted, as it seems prettily wrote, and rather interesting.

When we got to Mr. Vernon's the company were mostly assembled. Mr. Hamilton was at the upper end of the room, talking to his fair mistress and her father, while his friend stood with a careless air examining the company. Miss Warren had just caught his eyes as we entered the room, and her fan

was

was fluttered with more than uſual quickneſs. She aroſe to pay her compliments to us as we paſſed. That is Mr. Thornton, whiſpered ſhe; yet how needleſs is that information! could you fail to diſtinguiſh him?—I ſmiled. Still in raptures? ſaid I; I admire your conſtancy. But I tremble for his, though, whiſpered ſhe. We paſſed on to where Mrs Vernon was, and, after a few moments converſation, took our ſeats. I obſerved Mr. Thornton addreſſing her with great earneſtneſs, as ſoon as we left her. I gueſſed we were the ſubject of his diſcourſe, for his eyes were frequently directed to where we ſat. O, my dear Emilia, who is free from vanity? Why was I pleaſed with his notice? Might I not as juſtly imagine he was cenſuring, as commending me? Why do we ſo naturally experience a flutter-

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ing emotion when we believe ourſelves admired, even though the perſon is perfectly indifferent to us? My ſiſter too was thrown into a pretty ſort of confuſion. She caſt down her eyes, and affected to hide her face with her fan, whiſpering me at the ſame time, How the man ſtares at me! I proteſt he puts me quite out of countenance. Did you ever ſee ſuch confident eyes? Yet, otherwiſe he is really a handſome figure. Don't you think ſo, Harriot? Yes, anſwered I, he is well enough. And is that all? ſaid ſhe. What, he has piqued your vanity, I find, becauſe he preſumes to take notice of any body but your fair ſelf; but dont fret child, or your countenance will be as much diſcompoſed as you told me mine was ſome time ago. Juſt then Miſs Vernon joined us, and the ball began. My

ſiſter

ſiſter was ſo ſeemingly fond of that young lady, that, had I not known her real ſentiments, I ſhould have believed her a particular favourite with her, as ſhe has ever been with me. You, too, my dear Emilia, was greatly pleaſed while at Derby with her agreeable company. Do you know, my ſweet friend, ſaid ſhe, in a low voice, (that my ſiſter might not hear her) what an enviable conqueſt you have made to night? Mr. Thornton is in raptures with you; but I have given him a hint, that if he would wiſh for the honour of your acquaintance, he muſt endeavour to ingratiate himſelf with Miſs Fitzroy, or he will never be admitted to your houſe. However diſagreeable, the means are that are likely to procure him ſo deſirable a bleſſing, he thinks nothing too difficult, no ſacrifice too great, in order

to

to enjoy that happineſs. Ah, my dear flattering friend, cried I ſmiling, and to what purpoſe ſhould he take that trouble, circumſtanced as I am? What have I to do with conqueſts, who am under——I told him all that, ſaid ſhe, interrupting me, but nothing can, I find, diſcourage him in the purſuit his heart is ſet on: He vows, like a true inamorato, that the loſs of your fortune, which is all you can forfeit by not fulfilling your engagement to Mr. Brandon, is a trifle below his regard, when ſet in competition with your beauty, which is a fortune of itſelf. Here he comes, added ſhe, don't laugh, but he is going to engage your fair ſiſter for his partner. How his choice will be admired! Now mind with what a pretty ſimper Miſs Pen will receive him. I can hardly keep my countenance; ſhe ſtopped, for

he

he was now cloſe to us; when, with all the gravity imaginable, he offered his hand to my ſiſter, caſting an expreſſive glance at me, as did Miſs Pen, from very different motives. He danced a ſecond minuet with me, but for country dances again led forth my ſiſter.

Your old acquaintance Mr. Tyrell, who uſed, but with little effect, to attempt foiling you at your own weapon, raillery, thought proper to engage me. He was, if I remember right, a kind of favourite with you, and whom you thought fit to ſet down as one of my lovers, though, I dare ſay, the honeſt man never dreamt of any ſuch matter.

Before I joined the ſet, Miſs Warren, with a face in which diſapointment and chagrin were viſibly painted, drew me aſide. I am vexed to death, ſaid

ſaid ſhe, I half refuſed Mr. Thornton, and in revenge he has choſen the ugliest woman in the room for his partner. Haſty wretch! but he is ſufficiently puniſhed. I ſmiled at the fertility of her invention.—But, my dear Miſs Warren, ſaid I, I am amazed at your behaviour, what could tempt you to refuſe him? O, I proteſt I don't know, anſwered ſhe, I am a little capricious now and then—there's no help for it—tis paſt—adieu—Woe be to the man who has choſen me, for I am moſt intolerably out of humour. Away ſhe tripped, and I took my place next couple to my ſiſter.

You know Pen's method of dancing. My partner compared it to the hobbling of a lame gooſe. What the devil could tempt that fine fop to make ſuch a choice? ſaid he. Forgive me,

me, Miſs Harriot, ſhe is your ſiſter, or I ſhould ſay ſhe put me in mind of—Huſh, cried I, no more compariſons, I beſeech you. Chuſe ſome other ſubject for your wit, if you muſt needs be witty. Nay, ſaid he, I don't find any abſolute neceſſity to be ſo, but never man had a better object to exerciſe it on. I don't know if Miſs Fitzroy is witty herſelf, but I am ſure ſhe ſtands as good a chance as Sir John Falſtaff to be the cauſe of it in others. Again? ſaid I. O you are ſo inſufferably ſmart to night, there's no enduring you. Well, then, cried he, ſuppoſe that, inſtead of ſmartneſs, I attempt to be ſoft? That, ſaid I, I imagine you will find much more natural to you than the other. No, but ſeriouſly, reſumed he, I have long wiſhed to entertain you on the ſubject of love. I am ſorry to tell you

you then, said I, you are not likely to succeed, for I am sure that will never entertain me.

But adieu, my dear Emilia, I was tired of the assembly, and now find myself much more so in describing it, and, what is still worse, am, in all probability, exhausting your patience likewise. I will not, for the future, be so minute about trifles. Excuse me, for once, and believe me ever,

Yours,

HARRIOT FITZROY.

Miss

Miſs EMILIA SPENCER, *to Miſs* HARRIOT FITZROY.

REJOICE with me, my dear Harriot! Our family is agreeably augmented, by the company of my youngeſt brother from Oxford, and my ſiſter from the long ſtay ſhe has made with my aunt in London. Our endearing intimacy had not taken place before ſhe left us, and I believe you never ſaw her, but if you had, her perſon is now ſo greatly improved, that you would ſcarce know her again. Upon my word, ſhe is perfectly lovely, and, what is very ſurpriſing, appears almoſt inſenſible of that advantage. Indeed, her diſpoſition is quite oppoſite to mine; nothing ſeems to affect her either with

grief

grief or joy. Though juſt returned from the centre of gaiety and amuſement, ſhe does not teſtify any uneaſineſs at this ſolitary, this ſtupid ſtill life, where the employment of one day is uniformly repeated throughout the tedious year. Is this indolence, this inſipid ſameneſs of temper to be wiſhed for? I believe it is, upon the whole, ſince, I fear, the utmoſt happineſs this life affords is barely an exemption from miſery, without the enjoyment of any poſitive pleaſure. Is ſhe not, then, to be envied? She is at leaſt eaſy, though ſhe has not ſenſibility enough to be as I ſometimes am, thrown into an extacy, or to know that elevation and depreſſion of ſpirits (the natural conſequence of each other) that I, eſpecially when with you, am ſubject to; while I ſigh for variety, and

yawn

yawn the tedious hours away, only ſupportable from the kind aſſiſtance of that deluder hope, who, with agreeable proſpects, beguiles the weariſome journey of life, without which it would be almoſt intolerable. She, unſkilled in the rules of philoſophy, without taking the leaſt pains to acquire it, has happily ſtumbled on ſomething that comes neareſt to what is called contentment, of almoſt any perſon I ever met with. Moſt people have ſome particular turn, ſome favourite amuſement or purſuit, a hobby-horſe, as *Triſtram* calls it; but not ſo the fair Sidney; ſhe is neither fond of one thing nor another; her countenance teſtifies no more vivacity at a ball than at a funeral; nor does the preſence of a handſome fellow give her any more flutter or emotion than one of her own ſex. Lovely as ſhe

is,

is, ſhe cou'd not fail of attracting admirers. Indeed, I have been told, ſhe had, while in London, a numerous train, but their aſſiduities neither pleaſed nor embarraſſed her. Is not this an uncommon character, my dear Harriot? Were we mixed up together, and divided again, we ſhould then make a pair of tolerable women; while I had a little of her beauty, of which ſhe might ſpare even a good deal, without much injuring herſelf, and I, in return, would divide my ſpirits with her—but at preſent we are both very defective.

Your pardon, my dear, I forgot the flattering portrait you was pleaſed to draw of me. I never had cauſe to call your judgment in queſtion, and will therefore endeavour to think myſelf paſſable, ſince you declare me ſo.

My

My mother doats on the lovely Sidney; but to make me ſome amends for that partiality, my brother is equally fond of your friend. There is ſomething in my humour and way of thinking that pleaſes him. He tells me, I do not want for underſtanding, and has kindly undertaken to improve it. Our diſpoſitions are much alike: He has a great deal of fire and life in his compoſition, and, I really think, would make no inconſiderable figure in the *beau monde*, if a little poliſhed from the ruſt contracted in a college. I flatter myſelf, dear Harriot, you will not deny him ſome ſhare in your eſteem. He has, already, from the faint character I have been able to draw of you, enliſted himſelf in the number of your admirers, and, like me, ſighs for the happineſs of ſeeing you. My mother's

wish is, that he would take orders, but the young gentleman appears more calculated for the sword than the gown. I believe he would be mortified at the thoughts of disguising his really handsome person in such sober garments, as well as checking his spirit and natural vivacity, by conforming to that solemn character. Yet, as he is fond of arguing, and piques himself on his logick, I tell him it is the very profession he was born to shine in. You would be diverted, my dear, were you to hear our learned disputes, in which, you may believe, I am no match for him; but as he has no other person at present on whom he could better display his genius, he is forced to put up with me, rather than not exercise it at all. A little pedantry is almost inseparable from a scholar, warm from the university.

ſity. I do not ſpare him on that head, but he takes my raillery in good part, imagining himſelf ſufficiently revenged, when he has nonpluſed me in an argument by his ſophiſtry. My time is ſpent much more agreeably ſince his return. He furniſhes me with books, directs my ſtudies, reads to me while I work, points out to me the moſt ſhining paſſages of an author, and takes pains to make me acquire a proper pronunciation.

My ſiſter came in the other morning while we were at this employment. Why will you not take *me* for your ſcholar too? ſaid ſhe. Becauſe, my dear Sidney, anſwered he, you are already all that you ever will be; nature has made you a beauty, are you not ſatisfied with that? She beſtows bodies on ſome, minds on others. The former are not capable of improve-

ment, the latter are greatly ſo. Moſt of your ſex would prefer her outward gifts to the other, as thoſe are the moſt envied; but Emilia will have no reaſon to complain, if ſhe is not wanting to herſelf. My mother joined us while he ſpoke. You'll ſpoil that girl, ſaid ſhe angrily. I wonder, Charles, with the good ſenſe you are maſter of, you ſhould thus encourage her in her folly—ſhe is, already, but too vain of her fancied underſtanding—you'll make her ridiculous. What man would ever think of a learned woman for a wife? Of a pedantick woman, without underſtanding? That is to ſay, one of the moſt deſpicable characters in the world? I allow you, nobody would, ſaid he; but, ſurely, women ought to uſe every means as well as the men, to improve their natural good ſenſe. Would you have

them

them ignorant and illiterate? What proſpect of happineſs is there from an union with ſuch an one? Heaven defend me from a mere piece of houſhold furniture! from a pretty picture to be placed at the head of my table, who could neither entertain my friends nor myſelf, and for whom I ſhould bluſh every time ſhe attempted to open her lips! Whoever has the good fortune to chuſe Emilia as his wife, will find in her an agreeable companion, a woman of ſentiment and delicacy. O without doubt, cried my mother, with a ſatirical ſmile; but 'tis a little ſtrange, methinks, that theſe boaſted perfections you aſcribe to her, ſhould not attract more notice. Stupid wretches! Don't you think ſo, child? Looking ſcornfully at me; I would have nothing to ſay to them, were I you. Leave them for poor Sidney

here, who has not the good fortune to be ſo over-wiſe. Tis pity, to be ſure, but ſhe muſt ſtrive to be content with her lot. Come, my dear, turning to her, we are no fit companions for a lady of ſuch ſentiment and delicacy. My brother took fire at the contemptuous manner with which ſhe ſpoke of me, while I endeavoured to hide my tears, and ſtrove to calm his paſſion.

O, my dear Harriot! Why am I deprived of that endearing bleſſing, the love of my parent?

My brother has juſt been telling me an agreeable piece of news. You may remember a gentleman's ſeat in our neighbourhood, of which you took notice for its delightful ſituation. Some years it has only been inhabited by the Steward, but now the heir, having compleated his education, made the

grand

grand tour, &c. is come down to ſpend a few months in the country. My brother knew him at college, which he quitted, however, ſoon after his arrival, but even in that ſhort time they contracted ſo great an intimacy, that they have ſince then kept up a conſtant correſpondence with each other. He ſent immediately on his coming here, to inform my brother of it, requeſting to ſee him at the grove, for that is the name of his ſeat. He is gone to pay him a viſit, and I am dying with impatience for his return, as I want to aſk him a thouſand queſtions about a perſon who I have been told is perfectly agreeable.

Adieu, my ſweet friend. The arrival of this gentleman, and ſome families that are returned from town for the ſeaſon, will make Derbyſhire much more gay than it has been for ſome

ſtupid months paſt. Expect wonders in my next. If Mr. Durant has brought his heart with him (fie upon him if he has not) it will be no fault of us ſpinſters if he carries it back again.

Once more adieu,

EMILIA SPENCER.

Miſs HARRIOT FITZROY, *to Miſs* EMILIA SPENCER.

THE poſt is juſt going out, my dear Emilia. A crowd of viſitors, Mr. Thornton amongſt the reſt, renders it impoſſible for me to write more than a line or two. Expect a long letter the firſt opportunity, but I charge you do not wait for it before

fore you favour me with another. I long to hear how your new-come ſwain goes on.—Adieu, I dare ſtay no longer from our gueſts — Mr. Thornton no inducement to my ſpeedy return.

HARRIOT FITZROY.

Miſs EMILIA SPENCER, *to Miſs* HARRIOT FITZROY.

"MR. Thornton no inducement to "my ſpeedy return."—So ſays my dear Harriot. But are you ſure he is not? Take care, remember your engagement, we are ſo naturally prone to do what we ought not, that I begin to tremble leſt, when expoſed as you are to the aſſiduities of an

agreeable object, your heart ſhould take the liberty to diſpoſe of itſelf without the conſent of your reaſon; and I am much miſtaken in the knowledge of your diſpoſition, if the firſt impreſſion of love you ever experience will not likewiſe be the laſt. You are not capable of ſlight attachments, and have hitherto been bleſſed with a freedom, that will only be exchanged for a violent and laſting paſſion. Remember this prophecy, and be on your guard. Now for the ſtranger. I received from my brother, in anſwer to my enquiries concerning him, the following character.

Mr. Durant is about three and twenty, in his perſon uncommonly handſome, his temper rather lively, but a little reſerved to ſtrangers, fond of pleaſures, but too delicate—ſhall I call it?—No, I rather fear he has purſued

purſued them too eagerly, and ſo has left himſelf no new enjoyment under the ſun, conſequently is unſatisfied with what would pleaſe others, to whom they are a novelty, but to him only a repetition, therefore enjoyed with langour. He is rather of a ſatirical turn, and whether from a coldneſs of diſpoſition, or a too great nicety in taſte, treats the ladies in general with indifference and neglect; a circumſtance, that will, you may believe, greatly detract from his merit, in our eſtimation.

A ſtupid wretch! cried I, interrupting my brother at this part of his character; you need ſay no more, I gueſs what ſort of a creature it is. An inſipid ſoul, let him keep his diſtance, what ſhould he come amongſt us for, except it be to add to the diſtortion of our faces, by lengthening

out the frequent yawns that do already ſo much diſtinguiſh our ſober country viſits? I give him up as a loſt thing. I did once intend to honour him with a little coquetry, but, thanks to your intelligence, I ſhall now reſerve my airs and graces for thoſe who know how to value them; as for that compoſition of iced cream, whoſe paſſions are congealed by the froſt of his conſtitution, I'll have nothing to ſay to him—Softly, my dear, interrupted my brother, ſmiling; moderate your indignation, or you will deſcend with a very bad grace, after all this railing, to an acknowledgement of his perfections, which yet in juſtice you'll find yourſelf compelled to. After you have ſeen, and are able to form a right and impartial judgement of him, I'll lay my life, with all the froſt you attribute to him, he will yet light up

ſuch

ſuch a flame in the breaſts of our rural damſels, as they never before experienced. He light up a flame? cried I, ſcornfully. O, the vanity of you male creatures! No, ſir, we have more ſpirit than to be volunteers in love; we ought, and would be wooed, and not unſought, be won. I'll anſwer for our ſafety, with regard to your friend. Tell him from me, he miſtakes the point if he means to paſs for a fine gentleman; none can be ſuch but thoſe who endeavour to be the favourites of both ſexes. Tis not enough that a man is agreeable amongſt his own, he muſt likewiſe be gallant and aſſiduous to the other. I would not, for my part, give a pin for any of you, if you are not born with a natural reſpect and tenderneſs for the women. Commend me to the Spaniard and Frenchman for that: The former

adores

adores us, and the latter, though incapable of ſuch fervent and romantick paſſions, yet makes it the principal ſtudy of his life to form his manners to our taſte. And, believe me, a man is never thoroughly poliſhed without our aſſiſtance. You, Engliſh wretches, are the moſt inſenſible, unſociable mortals in the world. What but a height of ſtupidity and want of taſte, could make you, as you do, prefer your bottle, your horſes, nay your very dogs, to the pleaſure of our converſation? How reſtleſs, how conſtrained are you, whilſt in our company! how inſipid and forced is your diſcourſe on theſe occaſions! We have penetration enough to diſcover the pain our preſence gives you. Your reſerve communicates itſelf to us; we ſee you are impatient to leave us; no wonder, then, we take but little trouble to lengthen your ſtay. As

ſoon as we are ſeparated, each begins to breathe with freedom. Pleaſed to have the liberty of renewing your favourite and well-choſen topicks of dogs and horſes, you leave us, as you ſuppoſe, to the no leſs important ones of faſhions and ſcandal; but in that you are often miſtaken; for I will venture to aſſert, that, if our good ſenſe were to be judged of by our ſeparate converſations, ours would, in general, be found to excel yours as much in wiſdom as it does in decency.

Upon my word, dear Emilia, cried my brother, laughing, you have drawn a pretty character of us: I wiſh I could meet with one who would take the trouble of being a champion in our cauſe; for my part, I find myſelf unequal to the taſk: Perhaps, indeed, ſome of your accuſations are unanſwerably juſt. But, pray, may I not

now venture to aſk, if, allowing the caſe to be as you have repreſented it, your ſex are not, I dare not ſay equally, but, in ſome meaſure, in fault? Take an Engliſh beauty now, for example; a man is ſtruck with her charms, takes pains to be introduced to her, and what is the conſequence? Why, in general, he finds her ſo totally engroſſed by one beloved object, that ſhe is incapable of giving attention to any thing elſe. He talks to her, ſhe ſcarce vouchſafes an anſwer; he puzzles himſelf for ſubjects to entertain her with, while the pretty picture appears quite inanimate. Can a ſituation like this be long ſupportable, where the eye, which is ſoon ſatiated, is the only ſenſe that is gratified? But we were not talking of beauties, interrupted I; I know they often are inſipid enough; I ſpeak of the generality of women, and maintain,

that

that they have wit and ſpirit enough to render their ſociety deſirable, though you men give ſo convincing a proof of your good ſenſe as to ſlight it.

Why, to be plain with you, ſaid my brother, though I at leaſt have ever ſet a due value on them, yet you muſt own that, whether from baſhfulneſs or a natural reſerve, our Engliſh women are the leaſt entertaining companions of almoſt any nation in the world, and come very far ſhort of the vivacity of the French ladies. And who are we to blame for that? ſaid I. 'Tis neither the difference of climate, nor a deficiency of ſpirit and underſtanding, but all owing to your unſociability. Were we, like the French, accuſtomed early to a free and unreſerved intimacy with your ſex; did you, like them, ſtudy to render yourſelves agreeable to us, by qualifying yourſelves for talking on

subjects more suitable to our genius than dogs and politicks, we should soon see a change for the better: it would soon put an end to the frequent and tedious pauses in conversation, for which there is now no remedy but cards, which are, perhaps, the worst evil of the two. Gaming would soon be neglected, if, by studying the art of conversation, you would endeavour to render society a little more lively and animated. And does that entirely depend on us? asked my brother. Principally, answered I; at least if it be true, as you boast, that your understandings are superior to ours, you are the most proper persons to set us the example, since we shall follow, with less scruple, where we have such wise guides. We'll see what can be done, said he, laughing; I'll give a hint to my friend Durant, in what manner

manner he muſt behave, if he would inſinuate himſelf into your good graces. I dine with him to-day; perhaps we may drop in upon you in the evening, and remember I give you a caution to guard your heart. I tremble for your danger. O, you may make yourſelf perfectly eaſy on that head, cried I; I would not ſuffer myſelf to like him, if it was but out of contradiction, becauſe you think I ſhall.

The Miſs Forreſts and Mrs. Murry, a widow lady, drank tea with us that afternoon. You may believe the handſome ſtranger engroſſed ſome part of our converſation. Juſtice was done to his merits by the deſcription of our viſitors, but his manner was declared inſufferable. He had, it ſeems, been in company with thoſe ladies, each of whom thought herſelf worthy of diſtinction; but, even by their own confeſſion,

feſſion, the inſenſible hardly vouchſafed them a look. My mother ſaid it was not much to be wondered that men give themſelves airs now-a-days; young ladies knew, formerly, how to ſet a juſt value on their charms, but when every fop, however inſignificant, went down with them, what wonder that men of ſenſe deſpiſed ſuch trifles? In her time ſilence, and a modeſt reſerved carriage, were thought, nay proved by experience, to be the true methods to pleaſe, but now pertneſs and affectation were ſo much in vogue, what was to be expected but indifference and diſguſt? Affectation and pertneſs, madam ſaid I, nobody can defend; but I fear the opinion of mankind is ſo different from what it was in the days you look back to, that ſilence and reſerve would meet with as few admirers. Yes, I dare ſay that is

your

your way of thinking, cried ſhe ſcornfully, your practice confirms it. Here ſhe was interrupted, ſeaſonably for me, by the entrance of my brother and his handſome friend, the laſt of whom paid his compliments to us with a very becoming eaſe and politeneſs. Prepoſſeſſed as I was againſt him, I yet could not refuſe him my admiration, as never any one's outward appearance, at leaſt, had a better claim to it. My prejudice vaniſhed, and in its ſtead I found a ſtrong inclination to gain his good opinion. The very indifference that was aſcribed to him, added to this deſire; but, unhappily for us, the more earneſt we are for any thing the leſs liklihood there is of our ſucceeding. My ſtudy to pleaſe gave to my converſation that air of conſtraint that naturally accompanies it when we too much endea-

vour to excel. The freedom with which we had expreſſed our ſentiments before his entrance now forſook us, and a viſible conſtraint ſucceeded. In vain I attempted to reſume my uſual character of eaſe and vivacity, each ſentence was to be weighed before I uttered it, the conſequence of which was, that almoſt every thought was rejected, as too trifling or foreign to the purpoſe. In the mean time the other ladies, leſs ſcrupulous, or thinking it better to talk, though ever ſo inſignificantly, than be ſtupidly ſilent, uttered a hundred little impertinences, to which Mr. Durant liſtened with an affected complacency, accompanied with an archneſs in his countenance and an involuntary ſmile now and then, that, had I excited them, would have overwhelmed me with confuſion. Piqued at laſt with the

the ſuperiority he fancied himſelf maſter of, my pride and reſentment, by degrees, overcame my diffidence. What! thought I, ſhall this man go away triumphing in his imagined wiſdom, and perhaps ridiculing the ſilly ſouls his preſence could ſo much embarraſs? No, for the honour of my ſex, I will at leaſt endeavour to ſhow him that we are not the inſipid triflers he takes us for. This reflection was of uſe to me; I began inſenſibly to reſume my native eaſe. My brother had obſerved me with great attention, and when we were alone, deſcribed exactly what I had felt on the occaſion. You could never ſucceſsfully play the hypocrite, my dear Emilia, ſaid he; an attentive obſerver may read all the emotions of your mind in your expreſſive countenance.

Mr.

Mr. Durant did not continue his visit long after I began to recover my freedom, and this added to my vexation. He is disgusted with a visit that must have seemed tedious to him, thought I, and will, no doubt, be backward to renew it. What! has even beauty no attractions for him? Surely, my sister at least deserved his notice; yet, I think, his eyes wandered o'er her charms with as little emotion as he would have gazed on a fine picture. — O, the insensible! would to heaven I were ordained to be the avenger of our sexes quarrel!

My brother accompanied him when he took his leave, and I was all impatience for his return. Yet, what a weakness was this, my dear Harriot! What would my brother have thought, had he known the concern I already began to feel for his too handsome friend?

friend? Why was I ſo eager for his return? Could I juſtly expect any flattering accounts? yet I ventured to make the enquiry. Ah, Emilia, cried my brother, ſmiling, whence proceeds this curioſity? No palpitations, I hope? Remember you was not to like him, if it was but out of contradiction to me. And who ſays I do? interrupted I peeviſhly; ſurely one may ſpeak of a man without being ſuſpected of palpitation, as you call it. Without doubt, anſwered he; but people ſeldom appear ſo anxious as you do to know what opinion another has of them, when they are quite indifferent about it. I don't know what you mean, ſaid I, but to me the enquiry was very natural. Yet, give yourſelf no trouble to anſwer my queſtions; for you are miſtaken, if you imagine me ſo very anxious, as you ſeem pleaſed to think.

I would not wish, indeed, the man should have thought me silly, or disagreeable, and yet upon the whole I never appeared to less advantage than I did this evening. But I own it was foolish enough to ask you what he said of me; as, to a brother, it was not likely he should speak his real sentiments. I don't know whether he did or not, said he; but, I assure you, your ladyship was the only person of the company he mentioned while we were alone together. And what did he say? cried I, a little too eagerly. My brother burst into a loud laugh. What? answered he composing his countenance; why, he said that, that, —Psha—how teasing you are!—Well then, seriously, resumed he, he asked which was eldest, you or I. And was that all? cried I; upon my word a very laconick question, but which

conveys

conveys a great deal of meaning. You don't know what you have done by this frank communication — I ſhall certainly grow vain on being thus diſtinguiſhed by him. I beg brother, you will for the future, take care to prepare me, before you reveal ſuch flattering intelligence. The dear creature! which is eldeſt your ſiſter or you? was it not ſo? O, what harmony is there in thoſe tender words! I am a loſt creature, in love to all intents and purpoſes. Heigh—ho—another ſight of him would — but heaven defend me from ſuch a temptation! I am glad to find you ſo lively on the occaſion, ſaid my brother; 'tis a ſign your heart is at eaſe. And, to be ſerious, Mr. Durant, though my friend, is not the man I ſhould wiſh my ſiſter to have a partiality for, becauſe I fear he is too inſenſible to do

juſtice to your merit. I am miſtaken if his heart is capable of a paſſion ſuch as you ought to inſpire. His ideas on that head are too groſs; he has paſſions like other mortals, but is not over delicate in the means of gratifying them.

Would you believe it poſſible, Harriot, that, in ſpite of all this, I find a *je ne ſçai quoi* in Mr. Durant, that has more charms for me than any man I ever yet met with? What will be the conſequence, heaven knows; but, as you are informed of the riſe, you ſhall know the progreſs of what I ſuppoſe I muſt call my paſſion. What a tedious ſcrawl! But now, at laſt, adieu, my amiable girl; the promiſed long letter is impatiently expected by,

Your affectionate,

EMILIA SPENCER.

Miſs

Miſs HARRIOT FITZROY, *to Miſs* EMILIA SPENCER.

YOU have agreeably entertained me, dear Emilia, with the account you give of your favourite Mr. Durant. That he is your favourite muſt be wholly aſcribed to caprice; for, to be frank with you, if you have done juſtice to his character, you never gave a worſe proof of your judgement. To me he appears overrun with vanity and ſelf-conceit. Many people affect to be ſatirical, who yet are moſt deficient in the neceſſary talents for it; and diſagreeable at beſt is a perſon of that turn. Do not fear to try your wit on him, I'll anſwer for it you'll come off conqueror. I give you leave to mortify him, but

beware of love, that paſſion ſoon ceaſes to be an amuſement. You may diſpoſe of your heart with great gaity, but it may coſt you many painful hours before you regain it. Be ſure, at leaſt, to ſecure his in exchange, tho' even then you will, in my opinion, make but a ſorry bargain.

As for my love adventure, or rather my ſiſter's, nothing can go on more proſperouſly. Mr. Thornton is here continually, which has produced an amazing change in her temper. The tender paſſion her breaſt has till now been a ſtranger to, has ſoftened her diſpoſition into the utmoſt gentleneſs and good nature. How much am I indebted to her ſwain!—But I tremble for the conſequence when his falſehood is detected. And that he diſembles with her is viſible to me, to whom his eyes direct every compli-

ment

ment that he affects to pay her. I deteſt his deceit and ſhall not ſcruple to inform him how much I diſlike his conduct in this affair, when he makes a more open confeſſion of his ſentiments to me, but till then I have no pretence, as I am not to be ſuppoſed to know but he is ſincere in his addreſſes to her, nor ſhall I, for my own ſake, haſten an explanation; for, were I not engaged, in ſpite of his handſome perſon, I do aſſure you, he is not the *man*. Indeed the manner he has taken to introduce himſelf, would, of itſelf, be a ſufficient motive for my rejecting him, deteſting, as I do, every thing that has the appearance of deceit.

I wonder what can be his motives for indulging a partiality for me, when he knows my ſituation! The reverence I have for the will of a parent

would as effectually ſecure me from breaking my engagement, as the loſs of my fortune. He therefore deceives himſelf if he thinks I ever will be his, were he even generous enough to give that up. I have ſometimes thought, yet I ſhould be loth to paſs a raſh judgment on her, that my ſiſter, from ſelfiſh motives, takes artful pains to create in me a diſguſt for Mr. Brandon. She does not ſcruple to declare that, if in my ſituation, ſhe ſhould pay but little regard to the commands of a father, who exerciſed his authority in ſo arbitrary a manner. She has even, as I am informed, given Mr. Tyrrel encouragement to pay his addreſſes to me. The man has followed her advice, and is actually commenced lover, but with little probability of ſucceſs, I fear; yet my ſiſter ſpares no pains to ſet forth his perfections to me, taking care,

care, however, not to betray her motives, but talking of him only as a common acquaintance, and as ſuch, declaring ſhe knows no man more worthy of eſteem, judging, perhaps, by what ſhe experiences in herſelf, that I cannot long continue indifferent to a perſon who takes ſuch pains to gain my favour, and knowing how little ſway prudence, or any other conſideration, has over a woman who has once ſuffered her affections to be engaged. She, no doubt, hopes in time to be a gainer by my indiſcretion, for if I refuſe Mr. Brandon, my fortune is hers, and could I be prevailed on to accept Mr. Tyrrel, he has repeatedly aſſured me, as his motives are perfectly diſintereſted, his happineſs will be greater to take me without one, than if I was at liberty to diſpoſe of it as I pleaſed. But, notwithſtanding this proof of his

paſſion, I ſhall never think of any other man as a huſband but him my father, from proper motives no doubt, made choice of for me. I have long been accuſtomed to look on Mr. Brandon as ſuch, and have taken no ſmall pains to teach my heart a partiality for him. Thus prepared, I hope our meeting will be more fortunate than my fears will, ſometimes, give me room to imagine. In the mean time, I am really uneaſy about Mr. Thornton and my ſiſter; his ſeeming attachment to her has cauſed a great deal of ſpeculation amongſt the fair one's of Derby, and his uncommon taſte has been ſufficiently ridiculed. Miſs Warren is the livlieſt on the occaſion. She met him the other day in company, and rallied him ſo unmercifully, that I am told he loſt the command of his temper, and ſaid ſome levere things on her vanity and affectation,

affectation, which has made her ſo much his enemy, that ſhe rails againſt him wherever ſhe goes; the conſequence of which is, that the cenſorious ſay ſhe is in love with him, and has made advances that have not met with the return ſhe expected. How cautious ought we to be in our conduct, ſince hardly the moſt prudent can eſcape cenſure!

My ſiſter triumphs in her envied conqueſt, and, imagining Miſs Warren a vanquiſhed rival, takes upon her to defend the poor girl, as ſhe calls her. Love is involuntary, ſhe ſays, and who ſtands a better chance of exciting it than Mr. Thornton? For her part ſhe rather pities, than blames Miſs Warren's fondneſs for him. As ſhe is tolerably pretty, ſhe might be vain enough to hope. How could ſhe gueſs that his underſtanding was ſo much

above the common run of men? She had met with flatterers enough to perſuade her ſhe was agreeable—every perſon has not that delicate taſte and diſcernment which Mr. Thornton may boaſt of. In this manner will ſhe often congratulate herſelf on her conqueſt, while, in praiſing her fancied lover's ſenſe and other accompliſhments, ſhe does, in reality, pay the greateſt compliment to her own merit. I can ſcarce reſiſt a ſmile now and then, when, in the fulneſs of her heart, ſhe diſcovers the happineſs it gives her. Really, Harriot, ſaid ſhe this morning, as ſhe ſat at her glaſs, I almoſt wonder what Mr. Thornton could ſee in me, to create ſo tender a paſſion. My face is but barely paſſable, but then my perſon and air, indeed, were always allowed to be genteel. Height is a great advantage—I think I am rather

rather taller than you, nor is your waiſt near ſo ſlender. I wonder you don't endeavour to lace a little tighter. You can't imagine how much better you'd look. Though, let ſome people do what they will, they never can acquire that gracefulneſs, that the men ſo much admire. I have heard Mr. Thornton ſay, the face is the laſt thing he would be captivated with in a woman. The perſon and manner is every thing with him. And in that, ſaid I ſmiling, he told you I ſuppoſe, you excelled. Oh! anſwered ſhe, with a ſimper, half bluſhing; you would think me vain, were I to tell you *all* he ſays to me. I will ſpare you on that head, returned I; but ſay, has he come to the point yet? Does he talk of ſettlements, matrimony and all that?' Oh, lud! cried ſhe, I die at the very thoughts of it. What indelicate ideas

you

you have! I hope he will not talk on that ſubject this age. No? cried I, that's ſtrange indeed; but though *your* love is ſo platonick, it will be no great compliment to your charms if your *admirer's* is ſo too. He is not, in other reſpects, a very baſhful man, or I ſhould ſuppoſe his ſilence proceeded from that, for where his ſex are thoroughly in earneſt, nothing but a too great diffidence can prevent them from preſſing for an union with the perſon beloved. You have now been long enough acquainted, for him, at leaſt, to hint ſomething of that nature without a breach of indecorum; but this he has done, I ſuppoſe, though you will not honour me with your confidence.

To be plain with you, then, ſaid ſhe, he never has; and I am, to own the truth, a little ſurpriſed at his backwardneſs;

neſs; but I can pretty well account for it, there is a ſomething—I don't know what name to give it, in my manner, that, without my deſigning it, is apt to create an awe in people. I have, indeed, always kept the fellows at a diſtance; they never durſt take liberties with me, as I ſee them do with the light part of my ſex. I have ever, thank heaven, been treated by them with the greateſt deference and reſpect. Perhaps, ſaid I, you poſſeſs that uncommon gift that ſome ſaint had—I forget what they called her—but ſhe was not only virtuous herſelf, but cauſed all men that approached her to be the ſame. Yet, were I you, I would endeavour to make my lover explain himſelf. You muſt condeſcend to lay aſide, with him at leaſt, ſome part of that dignity; or whatever elſe it is that cauſes his too great diffidence, or

he

he may exhauſt all his ſtock of love in purſuing, and not overtake you at laſt. Upon my word, ſaid ſhe, I have a great mind to follow your advice. O do, by all means, cried I, ſpeak to the poor ghoſt that haunts you, and give him reſt, and do not keep him longer in torment by your ſilence. You are a drole creature, ſaid ſhe; I'll conſider on what is to be done for him. At that inſtant a rap at the door put her in a flutter, which was greatly encreaſed on her being told Mr. Thornton was come to pay his reſpects to us. Will you go, Harriot? ſaid ſhe. No, anſwered I, I have letters to write, the viſit is to you. What is more agreeable to lovers than a *tête a tête?* She ſmiled, for ſhe is grown the beſt natured creature imaginable, ſince the commencement of this affair, and left me.

A moment

A moment after, a ſervant delivered me a letter, which, to my ſurpriſe, I found from Mr. Thornton. The contents were as follows:

To Miſs Harriot Fitzroy.

Permit me, madam, though with the utmoſt diffidence, and a due ſenſe of my want of merit, to make an offer of a heart that has, from the firſt moment I beheld you, been warmly devoted to your charms. Can you be inſenſible of the conqueſt your eyes have gained? Have not mine, long ſince, betrayed my ſecret? Oh, lovely Miſs Harriot! if you have deigned to read their tender language, they will ſpare my pen the unequal taſk of telling how much I adore you. Dare I hope? —O talk not of your engagement— my fate depends on you. Your fortune

tune is but a trifle; deign but to accept of me and mine, and you ſhall never have cauſe to regret that loſs. My love for you is too pure to ſuffer the baſe alloy of intereſt to mix with it. Let your ſiſter enjoy your forfeited wealth, as ſome amends for the little deceit I have been compelled to practiſe on her—Heaven knows how much againſt my inclination. Believe me, for I fear you have thought my conduct, in this reſpect, blameable; but do me the juſtice to give me credit, when I aſſure you, I never have ſo much as even feigned a paſſion for her, though ſhe, from no foundation that I can recollect, has thought fit to imagine me her admirer. This affair begins to wear a ſerious aſpect—I am diſtreſſed in what manner to extricate myſelf, without incurring her reſentment. Yet every difficulty will vaniſh,

or at leaſt appear trifling to me, if you will permit me to pay my addreſſes where my heart is really intereſted more than it is poſſible to expreſs. The continual preſence of Miſs Fitzroy, which has ever prevented me the honour of a private converſation, obliged me to take this method to explain myſelf. I ſhall be the moſt anxious man alive, till I know your ſentiments of me. Oh, heaven! to what a depth of miſery ſhall I be plunged, if you reject my offered heart! Allow me at leaſt, I entreat you, an opportunity of ſpeaking to you—I have a thouſand things to ſay, which I cannot crowd into the narrow compaſs of a letter, all tending to aſſure you of the fervent paſſion of

Your devoted

CHARLES THORNTON.

What

What say you to this epistle, my dear Emilia? Am I to believe my sister has no foundation for her vanity? Sensible as she is, in other respects, could she have the weakness to imagine a conquest, had not some pains been taken to convince her of it? No wonder he is perplexed; deceit, if he has practised any, is justly punished; he must extricate himself the best way he can. I dread the effect an eclaircissement will have on her, as I shall be the greatest sufferer, when she is convinced who has been the object of his pursuit. The only method I can take to prevent it is to give a positive dismission to Mr. Thornton, and that I shall immediately do, in answer to his letter, begging him, at the same time, as I cannot, nor ever will, encourage his addresses, to conceal from every body the partiality he honours me with, and after

after that let him invent the beſt pretence he can for breaking with my ſiſter. I wiſh he had never come amongſt us, as I foreſee very diſagreeable conſequences from his indiſcretion.

Adieu, dear Emilia, I am going to write to him, a taſk no way agreeable to me, as you may believe; but neceſſity compels me. Believe me ever,

Yours,

HARRIOT FITZROY.

Miſs Emilia Spencer, *to Miſs* Harriot Fitzroy.

I Pity your ſituation, my dear Harriot, knowing the perverſe humour of Miſs Fitzroy. Were it not that you are likely to be involved in it, I ſhould be highly diverted at the tragi-comedy that is acting in your family. We might, till now, call it the double gallant, or a lover a remedy for ill humour, but the cataſtrophe is likly to deſtroy all. Poor Pen! if thou art ſhe—but, ah! how fall'n? how changed?—Yeſterday ſurrounded by a croud of envying rivals, to day a forlorn forſaken damſel, ſunk even below their pity. O the vile man!

So, you have actually rejected his addreſſes? Upon my word, you make a quick

quick diſpatch of buſineſs, and think nothing of diſmiſſing half a ſcore lovers in a morning, ſecure of new conqueſts whenever you chuſe to fill up their vacancy. But was you not a little haſty in diſpatching Mr. Thornton? As he is a good pretty fellow, might he not have ſerved to amuſe and beguile the tedious hours, 'till your deſtined heart arrives? I fear I ſhould have been tempted to a different conduct, but yours is certainly the moſt diſcreet, prudent, and all that.

Heigh—ho!—You will not wonder at my ſighing, when I have told you how much I was mortified this morning.—My brother came in as we ſat at work after breakfaſt. Will you take an airing on horſeback with me? ſaid he, looking at Sidney and me; Mr. Durant is to call on me, and as the weather is ſo fine I imagine neither

of

of you will have any objections to be of the party. No, I ſuppoſe not, ſaid my mother; Emilia has given her conſent already by her eyes, but ſhe will be diſappointed, nevertheleſs, as I would cure her of her too great love of gadding. Sidney may go, it will do her good. I do not think ſhe is quite well, a little exerciſe, therefore, is neceſſary for her. And why not both? ſaid my brother. Becauſe I do not chuſe it, anſwered my mother, and that is ſufficient. As you pleaſe, ſaid he. Certainly, cried my mother, I hope I may have the liberty of governing my daughters as I pleaſe, without any offence to you; yet it is but too viſible that you would teach one of them, at leaſt, to have no will but her own. I always chuſe to retire when you think proper to talk unreaſonably, ſaid he, leſt I ſhould forget

get the reſpect that is due to you as a parent; but, believe me, you would have a far juſter claim to it, if you would ſtrive to diveſt yourſelf of an unnatural prejudice that makes you treat a deſerving daughter with ſuch unmerited ſeverity. My mother coloured with reſentment, and was, no doubt, going to expreſs her diſpleaſure at his freedom, but he haſtily left the room, while poor I was obliged to endure the ſtorm of anger from which he eſcaped by flight. Amongſt many other ſevere things ſhe was pleaſed to ſay, I was accuſed of being a ſower of ſedition in her family; that I had, by my low cunning and artful inſinuations, alienated from her the affections of her ſon, and a great deal more to the ſame purpoſe, to all which I liſtened with placid ſilence, wrapt up in my own integrity.

At the concluſion of a diſagreeable lecture, I retired to my apartment, where I gave vent to my tears, but more from diſappointment, in not going with the handſome Durant, than from my mother's ill-nature, to which I am ſo much accuſtomed, that it begins to make little impreſſion on me.

From my windows I had the mortification to ſee my fair ſiſter, more than uſually lovely, aſſiſted, in the moſt aſſiduous and gallant manner, by Mr. Durant, to mount her horſe. The ſtirrup, the bridle, every thing was to be put in order by him; as what ſmart fellow would ſuffer a ſervant to rob him of that agreeable office? Away they rode, ſide by ſide.

Ah! where is now his inſenſibility? Can he continue ſo in company of ſo fair an object?—How vain, how deluſive were my hopes!—O mortifying!

do I then acknowledge I had entertained any? I bluſh at my inexcuſable vanity. Fooliſh, and too ſuſceptible heart, what had I to do with love?

In about two hours, the moſt tedious I ever ſpent, they returned—my ſiſter, like another Hebe, blooming in youthful beauty. Many bows and ſmiles paſſed between her and her ſwain, before they parted, and at laſt he took his leave with, what I thought, a viſible reluctance.

Sidney came running up to my room. I expected to find her in raptures, inſtead of which, flinging herſelf into a chair, I am exceſſively fatigued, ſaid ſhe, 'tis ſo long ſince I rode, that it was quite diſagreeable to me. Diſagreeable! exclaimed I; what in ſuch company? I don't underſtand you, ſaid ſhe, what do you mean? Nay, nothing, anſwered I, only I am inclined

to doubt you, when you affect to diſlike your jaunt. And why ſhould I not diſlike it? cried ſhe. Becauſe, ſaid I, I ſhould ſuppoſe Mr. Durant ſpared no pains to render it agreeable. But, I aſſure you, he failed then, returned ſhe, for I was really tired of it. Surpriſing! ſaid I, what an obdurate heart is yours, that could remain inſenſible to all the fine things I know he would ſay to you!—ſhe ſmiled.—Pray tell me, reſumed I, what ſubject did he entertain you with? I proteſt, ſaid my ſiſter, I cannot recollect what he ſaid, but I believe our principal topicks were about the fineneſs of the morning, and the agreeable proſpects of the country around us. And was that all? cried I, laughing. O, the inſipid mortal! Inſipid? repeated my ſiſter, upon my word the man is well enough, what would you have had him ſay to me?

me? What? cried I, why that you was an angel, a goddeſs, and twenty other pretty ſpeeches. Giddy creature! ſaid Sidney, how can you talk ſo? Well, but ſeriouſly, reſumed I, did he not treat you with a few compliments, at leaſt? Yes, I believe he did, anſwered ſhe, but I don't remember one of them, I was thinking of ſomething elſe at the time. Did you ever, my dear Harriot, know ſuch a pretty piece of adamant? Nothing affects her. Happy Sidney! what would I give for a little of your indifference!

My brother came in ſoon after ſhe left me. You look grave Emilia, ſaid he, I thought you had too much philoſophy to ſuffer a trifling diſappointment thus to diſcompoſe you. My mother, though without deſigning it, I fear, takes the beſt method in the world in your education. As you

have an uncommon share of spirits, her continually contradicting you is the ready way to inure you to the vexations to which this life is unavoidably subject. To a person who has never been controuled, the evils, that custom will render familiar to you, would be almost insupportable. The effect may be as you say, returned I, but you must allow the means are a little unpalatable. Rather so, I acknowledge, said he, but we ought to make the best of it, and rejoice that so much good can spring from so much evil. What says Sidney of my friend Durant? Not much, you may believe, from her disposition, answered I. But what says he of Sidney? O, a great deal, returned my brother, more than ever I heard him of any woman before.—You blush, Emilia, no envy I hope. Envy? cried I disdainfully. Nay, for-

give

give me, ſaid he, I have little cauſe to ſuſpect you of that odious vice; but it is ſcarce poſſible for your ſex to liſten with pleaſure to another's praiſe. Now I will *not* forgive you, cried I, this is ſuch an uncharitable reflection, that it ought to excite my everlaſting reſentment. And which then, ſaid he, ſmiling, would be the moſt uncharitable, you or I?—Huſh, here comes my mother—no more trifling.

What are you not dreſſed yet, girl? ſaid ſhe; I aſſure you if you don't make a little more haſte I ſhall go without you. Where, madam? aſked her ſubmiſſive daughter; I did not know you were going out. Then you ſhould have made it your buſineſs to know, ſaid ſhe, you mind nothing but folly. I tell you now, that I am going to dine at Sir John Mead's. I ſhall not wait, I aſſure you, the coach

will ſoon be here, and if your ladyſhip can make ſhift to decorate yourſelf before it comes, you go, if not, depend on it you will be left at home. I huddled on my things with all the expedition I could, and was ready juſt in time.

We found a good deal of company at Sir John's—ſome tolerable female figures, but the fair Sidney eclipſed them all—a beau or two, ſuch as they were, a little enlivened the party. They endeavoured to ſhine by diſplaying their country wit. One of them was flouriſhing it off to your ſatirically ſmiling friend, when lo, a graceful figure, a being of a ſuperior order, made his appearance.—Need I tell you who it was?—What a turn did his preſence give to my ſpirits! an univerſal flutter ſeized the fair part of the company. I ſhould, however, have

excepted

excepted my ſiſter, who continued in ſtatu quo, though ſhe alone ſeemed to attract his envied notice.

At dinner he ſat next to her, I, unfortunately for my repoſe, oppoſite to him. He talked to her. Their converſation did not ſeem to be very animated, as ſhe is far from being ſprightly, as you may ſuppoſe, from her character; I, on the contrary, was uncommonly ſo. Some little pleaſantries I uttered, at laſt drew his attention. He liſtened with complacency, and deigned to ſmile his approbation. Thus encouraged, I gave the reins to my vivacity. A youth, who ſat near me, attempting, a little unſucceſsfully, to be ſmart, drew upon himſelf my raillery. Mr. Durant ſeemed greatly entertained with our lively dialogue, and I frequently caught his eyes examining me with attention; but when

he turned from me to my dangerous ſiſter, I trembled for the conſequence of ſuch a compariſon.

After dinner he changed his ſeat for one near me—Gueſs what I felt on the occaſion! I am running myſelf into danger, Miſs Emilia, ſaid he ſmiling, if you are as unmerciful to me as you was juſt now to the gentleman you diſplayed your wit on. There is no cauſe for fear, returned I, I acknowledge myſelf a little inclined to cowardice, and ſhall not venture to engage in a combat wherein I ſhould prove myſelf ſo unequal. You are too diffident, ſaid he; but however, I ſhould encourage a diſpoſition ſo favourable to me, as I am but a bungler at the talent you poſſeſs in ſo eminent a degree. Do not accuſe me of what I have ſo little pretention to, ſaid I; the character of a wit is what I ſhould never

aſpire

aſpire to, 'tis a dangerous weapon, and though it may procure admiration, it ſeldom fails of creating an equal number of enemies, and I would very willingly diſpenſe with the former, rather than incur the latter. 'Some enemies envy may create you, ſaid he, but your many accompliſhments cannot fail of gaining you a greater number of admirers; ſince your raillery, though ſpirited, is not of that ill-natured kind that is generally diſliked, but only what is neceſſary to enliven converſation. O, you flatter me out of all bounds, cried I; proceed no farther, or, emulous to ſupport the imagined character you have drawn of me, I ſhall ſtand a chance of becoming ridiculous. You don't know what an effect vanity has on our weak heads, they grow giddy with applauſe. You, at leaſt, ſaid he, are in no danger, as I

doubt not you are too well accuſtomed to what you call flattery, to be much affected with it. O, but you don't conſider, anſwered I, what different conſequences the ſame thing may have when uttered by different people. You, for example, are a fine gentleman, conſequently a man of taſte, think what weight that muſt give to your compliments, when directed to a ruſtick nymph, bred in obſcurity. Spare me, cried he, I told you I could not retort your raillery. I was going to anſwer, but Lady Mead prevented me, by directing her diſcourſe to him. The attention of an object ſo much admired was not to be engroſſed by one perſon. The converſation now became general, yet, upon the whole, I had no reaſon to complain of the ſhare I had in it, as he continued to honour me with his approbation. I don't

don't know when I paſſed a more agreeable day. My mother was, however, a good deal out of humour when we came home. I gueſſed the cauſe, Sidney's charms had been too much neglected. She begun to diſcover a thouſand faults in Mr. Durant, who, but the preceding day, was as great a favourite as he is at preſent her averſion. My brother, open and ſincere in his temper, could not ſilently ſuffer his friend to be accuſed unjuſtly, without endeavouring to juſtify him; the conſequence was, that, after a diſpute carried on with too much warmth on both ſides, my mother retired to her apartment in diſpleaſure. Sidney and I were ſilent, though, you may believe, I found it no eaſy ſelf-denial not to take the part of my favourite.

Adieu,

Adieu, my friend, you have no reaſon to complain of the ſhortneſs of my letters; follow my example in this, as I always endeavour to do you in every thing elſe.

EMILIA SPENCER.

Miſs HARRIOT FITZROY, *to Miſs* EMILIA SPENCER.

THE cataſtrophe, as you ſaid, my dear Emilia, has ſpoiled all; a moſt dreadful piece of work we have had. When I wrote laſt, you may remember, I told you Mr. Thornton was come to pay us a viſit, and that I received a letter from him at the ſame time, which I ſat down to anſwer, leaving

leaving him and my ſiſter to a *tête a tête.* I had juſt ſealed my epiſtle when ſhe ruſhed into my apartment, rage in her countenance and agitated with a paſſion too big for utterance. She flung herſelf into a chair, and, for a few minutes, continued ſilent: a ſilence which I durſt not interrupt, and heartily wiſhed it might continue, at leaſt till the violence of her reſentment was ſubſided; but that, ſhe too ſoon convinced me will not be ſo eaſy a taſk. I made, I believe, a very ſilly figure, though I had nothing to reproach myſelf with, and foreſeeing the ſtorm that threatened, I aroſe to avoid it, but ſhe commanded me to ſtay. O I ſhall burſt with rage, cried ſhe; was ever woman uſed as I have been! What is the matter? my dear ſiſter, ſaid I; you terrify me. None of your inſulting pity, returned ſhe, with indignation;

dignation; dare not exasperate me more than I already am, or tremble for the consequence. I was silent.—This provoking meekness is still worse, cried she; unfeeling creature! to have so little sympathy for my sufferings. I don't know how to act, for fear of offending you, said I, but if I durst, I would again ask what has thus discomposed you? What I must feast your vanity, I'll warrant you, answered she, by telling you how I have been humbled! and, perhaps, you too have had a hand in the vile deceit that has been practised against me; but were I assured you had, fatally should you rue the hour, in which you dared—Ah, do not wound me by an unjust suspicion, interrupted I; believe me, I have too much reverence—if Mr. Thornton has—O name not that detested wretch, said she. — But 'tis clear,

clear, (after a pauſe) that you have been concerned in the wicked plot, or how ſhould you ſo readily name one of your accomplices? You wrong me, ſaid I, it was natural to think of him, ſince he has juſt left you, and conſequently I might moſt readily imagine he has been the cauſe of your preſent diſcompoſure. Don't inſult me girl, cried ſhe, I ſee your ill-natured triumph. O what a fate is mine, to be thus ſurrounded with enemies! Enemies? repeated I, how unjuſt! Yes enemies, ſaid ſhe. What but your envy, and that of the reſt of the pert young flirts, could have ſet Mr. Thornton againſt me, ſo tender a lover as he once profeſt himſelf? To what but your ill offices can I attribute his inconſtancy? Why, is he inconſtant? aſked I. Is he? returned ſhe—don't provoke me—A woman of

my underſtanding and fortune to be thus ſlighted! Oh, I ſhall die with ſhame! and when I condeſcended too—What do you ſtare at?—looking wrathfully at me—I won't ſatisfy your impertinent curioſity. Call it not by ſo harſh a name, ſaid I; I wiſh not to know what you think proper to conceal, but if the unburthening your heart to your true friend would give you any relief, ſpeak, and let me ſhare your ſorrow.—O this affected tenderneſs won't paſs, ſaid ſhe; I know your rancorous heart too well to truſt you. 'Tis very hard, ſaid I, that you ſhould have ſuch unfavourable ſentiments of me: What part of my conduct has deſerved ſo cruel a reflection? When was I wanting in a true ſiſterly affection? Theſe whining ſpeeches won't paſs, ſaid ſhe; I know your vanity and ſelf-conceit; but don't plume your-

ſelf

ſelf too much on your fancied perfections, you may be taught humility in time, as well as your betters. She was going as ſhe ſpoke this, but unfortunately happened to caſt her eyes on the letter, which, in my confuſion, I had forgot to conceal—The direction, too, chanced to be uppermoſt. A name that had lately been ſo dear to her could not eſcape her notice. She flew to ſeize it, had I not timely prevented her. O, have I caught you? cried ſhe, well may you bluſh, guilty as you are. Of what? ſaid I, with vivacity; I have done nothing that I need be aſhamed of. Aye, brave it out, ſaid ſhe, 'tis like your uſual confidence. That ever I ſhould live to ſee a ſiſter of mine, a daughter of that prudent mother we were bleſſed with, ſo far forget what ſhe owes to decency, as to engage in a ſhameful intrigue!

Good

Good heaven! I want words to expreſs my horror. Is it poſſible, after all the good council I have given you, in ſpite of the blameleſs example you have before you, that I ſhould detect you in correſponding with a fellow? Give me the horrid letter. I will—I have a right to ſee it—Mr. Brandon ſhall hear of this. You threaten me, cried I, but I have charity enough to pardon both that and your unjuſt upbraidings. I can make allowance for the diſappointment you have met with. This is no time to reaſon cooly, but when you have recollected yourſelf, and are ſenſible of the impropriety of ſuch a behaviour as yours has been to a ſiſter, I may then, perhaps, condeſcend to give you reaſons for my conduct, at preſent I cannot ſo far maſter my juſt reſentment as to indulge you. The freedom of this ſpeech exaſperated

her

her to the higheſt degree, and drew on me a torrent of reproaches, till, out of breath with raving, ſhe at laſt left me, vowing, however, to be revenged for the injury I had done her.

I was a good deal diſcompoſed for ſome time after, and, in order to eaſe my mind, ſat down to write to my dear Emilia; nevertheleſs I did not neglect to ſend my letter to Mr. Thornton, from whom, before he could have read mine, I received a ſecond, which I tranſcribe for your peruſal.

To Miſs Harriot Fitzroy.

I am miſerable to the higheſt degree, charming Miſs Harriot, when I recollect the ſcene I was this morning engaged in. Never man more ſeverely ſuffered for his imprudence. I have incurred your ſiſter's everlaſting reſentment,

ſentment, but to this misfortune I might, perhaps, in time, by the aſſiſtance of philoſophy, be enabled to reconcile myſelf, were it not for the dreadful conſequence that attends it. O lovely Harriot, I am baniſhed from your houſe! a houſe ſo dear to me from its charming inhabitant! Yet, if you condeſcend to receive my addreſſes, ſurely her authority does not extend ſo far as to debar me the happineſs of ſeeing you. The honour of Miſs Fitzroy's preſence there, I neither expect nor deſire. Our laſt interview —I cannot think of the ridiculous figure I then made without a ſmile— was truly comic; yet I dont know any thing that would tempt me to act ſuch a ſcene over again.

As ſhe is your ſiſter ſhe naturally claims my reſpect, and for that reaſon this affair affects me in a different manner

ner from what it would have done, had it been any other lady. Could I deſcribe it juſtly, forgetting, for a while, your relation to one of the performers, you would not be able to refrain a ſmile at our expence.

Figure to yourſelf, adorable Harriot, an imagined lover, indulged in a *téte a téte* with his miſtreſs, yet when rapture was no doubt expected, waſting the precious moments in frivolous remarks on the beauty of the morning, inſtead of extolling the charms of his beloved; while the condeſcending lady tries every method that modeſty would permit, in order to lead to a more intereſting ſubject.—Think of a man's evading the many kind hints he is favoured with, the fair lady, mean time, taking pity on his too great timidity, generouſly lays aſide the awful reſerve to which ſhe attributes it, and, with the moſt

moſt inviting freedom, ſpeaks at laſt ſo plain that he is forced to comprehend her kind meaning.—Think of his perplexing ſituation—ſee him hammering out ſome incoherent ſentences, and thoſe none of the tendereſt neither, which yet are unfortunately interpreted as ſuch, and his confuſion attributed to a too diffident and reſpectful paſſion.—I muſt laugh at the fooliſh figure I made, though at the time I wiſhed myſelf a thouſand miles off.—Finding me ſtupidly ſilent to all the encouraging things ſhe could ſay, Miſs Fitzroy began at laſt to be out of patience, and, looking fixedly on me for a few moments, What am I to think of this unaccountable behaviour of yours? ſaid ſhe. Do you ſtill doubt the ſucceſs of your ſuit? Upon my word, ſir, I am greatly embarraſſed—have I not condeſcended—

but,

but, added ſhe after a pauſe, you ought to ſave my bluſhes. I have, already, but too plainly ſpoke my favourable ſentiments of you. What could I ſay to this? Better any thing perhaps than what I did. That you think favourably of me, ſtammered I out, is an honour of which I ſhall be ever moſt gratefully ſenſible. The eſteem of a lady of your merit and accompliſhments, is a diſtinction that moſt agreeably flatters my ſelf love. I muſt believe I have ſome little merit, or a perſon of your diſcernment would not favour me with it.—I pauſed—hem'd too, by way of clearing my voice. In reality, not knowing what to ſay next, Miſs Fitzroy's eyes were fixed on me, mine on the ground. A ſhort ſilence enſued.—Never man was in greater perplexity.

Proceed, ſir, ſaid ſhe, peeviſhly, I am all attention. — Another hem, on my part—at laſt—As I was ſaying, madam, reſumed I, your good opinion does me the higheſt honour, and I ſhall ever be grateful for it, and equally ſenſible how little I deſerve ſuch a diſtinction—a hem again—and as to love and all that—why, to be ſure, I don't know any perſon I have a greater regard for. The man's mad, cried ſhe, out of all patience at my unmeaning harangue; what are you driving at, with your tedious ſenſeleſs preamble? Speak plain, ſir, and if poſſible a little common ſenſe. Well then, madam, ſaid I, in ſome confuſion, to be plain with you, I fear we have—*I* have, I mean, given you reaſon to imagine—Excuſe me, Miſs Fitzroy, I have the utmoſt deference and reſpect for you, but though I acknowledge your

your many accompliſhments, and amiable perſon is worthy of a far more worthy conqueſt than I can pretend to be; yet my heart has never—pardon my frankneſs—known warmer ſentiments for you than thoſe of friendſhip and eſteem. I aroſe, while I ſpoke this, ſeeing the ſtorm that threatened me gathering on her contracted brow.

For the lady's ſake, for whom great allowance ſhould be made, conſidering the mortification I was compelled to make her ſuffer, I ſhall not repeat the anſwer ſhe thought fit to honour me with; you may gueſs it was none of the moſt gentle. In vain I endeavoured to calm her rage, but finding all I could ſay ineffectual, I took my leave with a low bow, which ſhe cruelly vowed I ſhould never repeat in her

houſe. So ended the moſt diſagreeable viſit I ever made in my life.

And now, madam, it depends on your goodneſs to remove the uneaſineſs I ſuffer.—Deign to accept my hand and fortune—your affections are, I flatter myſelf, unengaged—I plead no merit, but tremble for the ſucceſs of my hopes—all I can ſay in my favour is, that never man experienced a more fervent or diſintereſted paſſion than that which animates the breaſt of,

Your devoted,

CHARLES THORNTON.

I ſhall return no other anſwer, my dear Emilia, than that I have already ſent to his firſt epiſtle. In it I ſpoke my ſentiments, and nothing ſhall ever make me change my reſolution.

Oh,

Oh, that Mr. Brandon were here, to ſave me from the pain of fruitleſs purſuers!—I will be only his.

Adieu, my dear friend—my uneaſineſs is but beginning. I dread to ſee my ſiſter—yet why ſhould I, ſince I have nothing to reproach my ſelf with?

Believe me ſincerely yours,

HARRIOT FITZROY.

EDWARD DURANT, *Eſq.* to HENRY BRANDON, *Eſq.*

WILL that confounded buſineſs of yours never be ſettled, my dear Harry? I am dying with impatience to have you with me. Do, patch it up as faſt as you can for your

friend's ſake, I am ſure you are but ill calculated for thoſe plodding money matters, and are, like me, much more dexterous at ſcattering than gathering. Why ſhould you give yourſelf ſo much plague about ſettling your uncle's affairs? Should you even loſe a little by your negligence, you have reaſon to be content, conſidering the noble fortune that awaits you — a little burthened, indeed, with what too is, perhaps, the heavieſt of all burthens— a wife—but ſurely it is worth the coming for, nevertheleſs. The reaſons you gave for your delay is what I might juſtly expect from a fellow of your delicate notions, viz. That you would not pay your addreſſes to one who ſhould have reaſon to ſuppoſe her fortune was the inducement, no more than you would accept of her hand without being aſſured that you did not

owe

owe it merely, to the authority of her father.—I congratulate you, that the apropos death of your uncle has removed the firſt difficulty, and fortunately brought you on a par with her in point of riches, for I think, with you, it muſt hurt a man of ſpirit, to be indebted to his wife in ſo material an article. A woman, it is allowed, may be ſo to her huſband, becauſe he will be too generous to upbraid her with it; but a wife, we know, will be apt to give herſelf airs on it. For your other unneceſſary ſcruple, I never will encourage you in it—take care, Harry, that you do not too late, repent your romantick project. The girl's handſome, I am told, and beſet with lovers; you may chance to like her, but women are ſo capricious, and generally make their choice with ſo little judgement, that,

in spite of your fine person and accomplishments, its a thousand to one if coming upon her, concealing who you are, she should like you, and then, I know the consequence, from your over delicacy, will be, that you refuse a fortune kind providence has so obligingly thrown in your lap. Woe be to you if you do act so inconsistently; nobody will, or ought to excuse so unpardonable a piece of folly. The advice I have often given you, and which I again repeat, is, that you set off immediately in your own proper person; no good ever comes of artifice and disguise. Come then, I say, and boldly claim the wife, (a desirable legacy to besure) that your generous friend has thought proper to leave you. I would, as you requested, have, ere now, gone and viewed the premises; but to own the truth, a transient

passion

paſſion or two I have been infected with, ſince I came to the grove, has hitherto prevented my journey.

Do you not ſmile, Harry, to hear, me talk of paſſion, knowing, as you do, my natural indifference for the pretty creatures? Faith I can't exactly account for this change myſelf—you need not, however, be under any violent apprehenſions for me, I have ſtill a thouſand miles to travel in the road of love before I overtake you, whoſe heart is made of ſuch combuſtible ſtuff, that every bright eye ſets it on fire—mine would hardly be warmed, with what would ſet yours in a blaze.

Upon the whole, I have no great affection for Derbyſhire. A man had need be even a keener ſportſman than I am, to know how to diſpoſe of his time. It muſt be owned here is plenty of game of all kinds, whole

coveys of females, who are, no doubt, heartily mortified that I ſhould prefer any other chace to them, but 'tis their own fault; were they not ſo eaſily caught, they would afford more diverſion, and I ſhould, conſequently, be more eager in the purſuit. By way of curioſity, I dangled after them a little while at firſt, but, the lord defend me from ſuch a ſet of inſipids! a doſe of their converſation operated on me like opium, nothing could have been more effectually preſcribed to compoſe the ſpirits. You'll aſk me then, who could give riſe to the paſſions I talk of? Why, a very pretty girl, I aſſure you. I liked her almoſt a whole day—for all that time was ſpent in gazing at, and admiring her perſon, but ſhe has nothing elſe to recommend her, ſo that her empire could not have been of any very long continuance,

ance, had no other object haſtened my inconſtancy; but a ſiſter of hers, who had paſſed unnoticed at firſt, gradually drew my attention by her wit and vivacity, and the agreeable Emilia is, at preſent, the reigning favourite. She is tolerably handſome too, though far inferior to the other, yet one can only admire the one, while tis ſcarce poſſible to be long in company with the other, without being affected with ſomething like love. She has ſuch eyes!—O, Harry you uſed to be in raptures with fine eyes, and none can look at Emilia's with indifference. Then ſhe has a moſt elegant perſon, and her hand and arm are enchanting. Added to this, ſhe ſings like a nightingale, her voice goes thrilling to my heart — O, what a lover-like ſpeech was that! Her mother has the devil of a temper, I am

told, and treats my charmer very cruelly. Something might be made of all this, but then her brother is my friend, and the lord defend me from matrimony! I dye at the wicked idea of it.

Adieu, Harry, haſten to me as you value the friendſhip of,

Your,

EDWARD DURANT.

Miſs EMILIA SPENCER, *to Miſs* HARRIOT FITZROY.

I am ſincerely affected with my dear Harriot's diſagreeable ſituation, and heartily join my wiſhes to yours for Mr. Brandon's arrival, for you will never

never have peace while you live with a perſon of your ſiſter's temper. What, I wonder, can ſo long delay your lover's coming? I am all impatience to ſee him. Why have I not the liberty of inviting my friend to ſpend the tedious interval here, where I would uſe my beſt endeavours to amuſe her? I ventured to give a hint of this nature to my mother, but alas! my dear girl, 'tis a ſufficient reaſon for her to diſlike you, becauſe you honour me with your friendſhip: What but that could make her inſenſible to perfections, that gain every one's eſteem, where envy will permit? All my unhappineſs proceeds from her unnatural diſlike of me; yet I muſt ever reverence her as a parent. Mr. Durant's growing partiality for me, which I once thought the moſt deſirable event that could

happen,

happen, has, on the contrary, produced very diſagreeable conſequences. My mother has taken a moſt unaccountable—no, I ſhould not call it ſo, ſince her averſion to him is viſibly on my account—I ſuffer, however, ſeverely for the diſtinction he honours me with.

Am I not very grave to-day, my dear? Shall I own the principal reaſon is, that this ſaid—what ſhall I call him?—Is going to leave us for ſome time? A friend of his is arrived from London, who intends, it ſeems, to purchaſe an eſtate, but where, is not determined. He has been told of one in your neighbourhood. Ah, Harriot, for my ſake, hide your charms—you may gueſs from whom—I tremble for his heart. They ſet off to-morrow morning.

I beſeech

I beſeech you, content yourſelf with the conqueſt of Mr. Lenox, his friend, who, I aſſure you, from the little I have ſeen of him, appears to have merit enough to ſatisfy the moſt ambitious of our ſex. Not Durant himſelf can boaſt of a more graceful perſon, a more inſinuating manner. I could almoſt acknowledge that he is the fineſt figure of the two. Your lover Thornton, handſome as he is, muſt, in juſtice, give place to this charming ſtranger.

Where is Mr. Brandon all this time? He deſerves to loſe you, ſince he leaves you thus, by his abſence, expoſed to danger.

O, my dear, they are below. Durant is come to take his leave. How my heart flutters! How eaſily has it, of late, been diſcompoſed!

Adieu,

Adieu. Write to me—O, what ſubjects will you now have for your pen! Such a pair of—help me to an epithet, Harriot, when you ſee them — as Derby was never before bleſſed with.

EMILIA SPENCER.

HENRY BRANDON, *Eſq. to Miſs* PENELOPE FITZROY.

Madam,

I Flatter myſelf, from the friendſhip you once honoured me with, you will oblige me in a requeſt I have to make. My honoured friend, your father, kindly partial to the little merit he thought proper to diſcover in me, judged me worthy to become his ſon, but

but I cannot think of claiming that happineſs till I am aſſured the lady, your ſiſter, whom I aſpire to, would voluntarily have made me her choice, had there been no engagement between us: for that reaſon I am determined to addreſs her without diſcovering who I am. My requeſt, therefore, is, that you would have the goodneſs to further my deſign, by concealing your knowledge of me.

No one elſe at Derby can diſcover me, as I never was in that part of the world. I ſhall eſteem it as a particular favour, if you will oblige me with ſecreſy. If Miſs Harriot ſhould reject my paſſion, I am determined to free her from an engagement, to which her heart is averſe. It will be eaſy to penetrate her real ſentiments, and that will determine me how to act. I ſhall have the pleaſure of paying my reſpects

to

to you in a week at fartheſt. In the mean time I am, Madam,

Your moſt obedient ſervant,

HENRY BRANDON.

Miſs HARRIOT FITZROY, *to Miſs* EMILIA SPENCER.

I Cannot account for my ſiſter's preſent behaviour, my dear Emilia —but no matter for the cauſe, 'tis ſufficient it has produced ſuch happy effects. From rage and invective, ſhe has made a ſudden tranſition to calmneſs and good-nature. Even the late deteſted Thornton has, by ſome means or other, obtained her forgiveneſs.

I was

I was a little too haſty in yielding to my reſentment the other morning, ſaid ſhe, Harriot; a more impartial review of Mr. Thornton's behaviour has ſet that affair in a different light from what it appeared to me at firſt. My temper is warm, but nobody is more ready to acknowledge an error, when ſenſible it is ſuch, than I am. I think it will be doing him injuſtice to break off our intimacy, when the little difference we had proceeded from an error only, not any fault in his behaviour, which has ever been extreamly polite and reſpectful. I am unwilling too, I own, to have the world think I am ſo affected with a trifling diſappointment, as it naturally will, if we drop his acquaintance. He has my leave, therefore, to renew his viſits, if he thinks proper. This affair will give riſe to fewer ill-natured reflections,

when

when people see how indifferent I am about it. Then will they be disappointed of the wish'd-for opportunity to triumph over me with their pity, which they will have no pretence to honour me with, when they see me so differently affected from what they no doubt expected. He loves you, added she, and, I have been informed, with a passion so disinterested—a thing very uncommon in this depraved age—that he has greatly raised himself in my opinion by it. But for your engagement with Mr. Brandon—who, by the bye, does not give any great proof of the warmth of his passion, by his long and unnecessary absence — but for that, I say, I know no person with whom you would stand a greater chance of being happy than Mr. Thornton.

You

You have charmed me, ſaid I, by a behaviour ſo different from what moſt people would practice in your circumſtances; but, without flattery, you are miſtreſs of ſo much good ſenſe, that when you do not give the reins to paſſion, I know nobody that can act more commendably. I agree with you, that to continue an acquaintance with Mr. Thornton will moſt effectually ſilence ill-natured reflections, though, but for your ſake, I ſhould be glad of a pretence to break with a perſon who will perſecute me with a paſſion that, however diſintereſted it may be, my conſcience will not ſuffer me to encourage, nor, indeed, were I diſengaged, would he be the man, worthy as he is, that my heart would make choice of. I don't know, ſaid my ſiſter, ſmiling, whether I ought to believe you ſpeak your real ſentiments, when you affect

to diſlike him, for he is, in my opinion, too agreeable to be indifferent to the perſon he endeavours to pleaſe. Yet, I aſſure you, he is ſo to me, returned I; and, if I know my heart, will ever remain ſo. Then you are uncommonly nice in your taſte, ſaid my ſiſter; or, rather, I fear you have too high raiſed expectations of Mr. Brandon. But, don't deceive yourſelf, I know him, and do aſſure you he is far inferior to your preſent lover—But come, added ſhe, as you do not diſapprove of my reſolution in his favour, I will, I think, inform him of it. No doubt the poor man is very uneaſy, while baniſhed from the preſence of his beloved. A ſhort note from me will reſtore his peace. So ſaying, ſhe immediately diſpatched a ſervant with a billet. What the contents were I don't know, but that very evening

evening Mr. Thornton made his appearance at our houſe. I was writing when he came, ſo that he had ſettled matters with my ſiſter before I ſaw him. Their meeting now, had produced a very different effect from their laſt, I found them both in the higheſt good humour. Mr. Thornton was uncommonly lively, though he has, at all times, a tolerable ſhare of vivacity. As the converſation was only on general topicks, I had the leſs reaſon to diſlike his viſit; his eyes alone made any diſtinction between my ſiſter and me.

My dear Emilia, I have this moment received the favour of your ſhort, but agreeable letter. What do you tell me? I muſt be upon my guard, indeed, if the ſwains be what you deſcribe. What an unexpected event! Little did I think I ſhould ſo ſoon ſee your

your admired Durant. Be under no apprehenſions, my friend; if your ſiſter's beauty failed, you have no reaſon to dread the effect of mine. No, my dear, he has ſhown his juſt taſte in diſtinguiſhing true merit; and thoſe who captivate by the graces of the mind, are a thouſand times more ſecure of the conſtancy of their lovers, than thoſe who charm by the beauty of their perſon only.

They are come! The noiſe of a carriage drew me to the window. A chaiſe paſſed; one of the gentlemen (I am ſure it muſt be them) put his head out as they drove by our houſe, and looked up as long as the chaiſe was in ſight.—An elegant figure! I aſſure you. He ſaw me, I believe, for the window was open. Which was it, I wonder, your ſwain or mine, that is to be? He has dark brown hair,

hair, an aquiline noſe, and blue eyes, I believe, but I cannot be poſitive, for I had but a tranſient glance. I fancy it muſt have been Mr. Durant, for he has juſt that kind of face you uſed to admire. My curioſity is but half ſatisfied. I long for a nearer view, but how that is to be attained I don't know, as it will be ſome time before they can make any acquaintance at Derby, and till they do—though I may chance to meet them in my walks, indeed, but that is not enough, I muſt converſe with them before I can form a right judgement of their merit. "Speak, that I may "ſee you," ſays ſomebody—I forget who—and I may at leaſt ſay Speak, that I may know you. Though as converſation is generally managed now a-days, they may do that and leave

me as ignorant of their real character as if they had continued ſilent.

Adieu, deareſt Emilia, expect another epiſtle as ſoon as I have that ſubject for my pen from which, you tell me, you hope for wonders.

HARRIOT FITZROY.

Miſs HARRIOT FITZROY, *to Miſs* EMILIA SPENCER.

THANKS to my deareſt Emilia, I have very ſoon had an opportunity of ſatisfying my curioſity. It was a bright thought of yours to ſend a letter by ſo agreeable a meſſenger as Mr. Durant; he deſerves to be honoured with your commands, for the

the very ſecond day after his arrival at Derby, he took the trouble of delivering it to me in perſon. His friend too, accompanied him, and, to ſay the truth—but indeed they both deſerve all, nay more, than you have ſaid in their favour. They ſtayed almoſt two hours with us, and yet ſhewed no ſymptoms of wearineſs, and I own, to me, the viſit was far from appearing tedious: But you will not wonder at that when I tell you, that my dear Emilia was frequently our pleaſing ſubject. Mr. Durant has ſecured my good opinion, by the reſpectful, nay tender things he ſaid in your praiſe: On other topicks, for his acquaintance with you was too ſhort to ſay much on that, Mr. Lenox was no leſs eloquent than his friend. Forgive me, my dear, but I own of the two, I think the latter has the moſt

engaging manner. There is ſomething inexpreſſibly pleaſing in all he does or ſays, and he has the moſt expreſſive, ſenſible countenance I ever ſaw. I was not miſtaken in his eyes, I find, for it was he that looked at me in paſſing. They are blue, and upon my word—but I'll ſay no more of eyes—the ſubject is too intereſting. What are his charms to me, you know?—Though there can be no crime in giving my opinion of him—I would do juſtice to every body.

It is very odd that Mr. Brandon ſhould ſo long delay his return. I begin to think, with my ſiſter, that he will prove but a very cool lover—but, no matter—it is my fate—he muſt be the man, I ſuppoſe.—Suppoſe?—What an expreſſion, when it is paſt a doubt!

Mr.

Mr. Thornton came in while the ſtrangers were with us. I cannot ſay I ever received his aſſiduities with a worſe grace. What buſineſs had the man to be particular to me before them? Nothing makes people look ſo ſilly. And what might be his wiſe motives I cannot gueſs, but he took it into his head to be more than uſually ſoft in his manner. I could not help diſcovering ſome little confuſion, which gave me the greater mortification, as it would bear a different meaning from what it deſerved, and the ſtrangers, Mr. Lenox in particular, were very attentive to my behaviour. I believe, indeed, he diſapproved of Mr. Thornton's manner of treating me; as what man of ſenſe would not, you know? For are there not opportunities enough to act the lover, without playing the fool

before company? I was heartily vexed; fortunately, however, an engagement obliged him to ſhorten a viſit, which I was beginning to think he would never put an end to.

After he was gone, Mr. Durant, curious, I ſuppoſe, to know ſomething more about a man who had but too plainly diſtinguiſhed himſelf as my lover, introduced the ſubject with a genteel compliment in his favour. My ſiſter was profuſe in his praiſe; ſaid he was a moſt amiable man, had a noble eſtate, but not in this part of the country, where he was only on a viſit to a family in our neighbourhood, one of the young ladies of which a particular friend of his had lately married. I believe, added ſhe, looking at me with a ſmile, he did not at firſt intend ſo long a ſtay, but he has met with ſome inducement that

will,

will, I fancy, detain him ſtill much longer. You may gueſs how agreeable this pretty ſpeech was to me. I bluſhed from real indignation, and what increaſed my vexation, was, the effect it produced in Mr. Lenox, who, from that moment, behaved to me with viſible coldneſs and reſerve. Yet, what was it to him, I wonder? Our acquaintance had been too ſhort to attribute it to jealouſy. How ridiculous but to ſuppoſe ſuch a thing poſſible! Don't laugh at me: Yet this looks ſo like female vanity, that I am half tempted to blot it out; at leaſt I will ſay no more of our viſitors, leſt I ſhould inadvertently repeat the fault; but this will oblige me to put an end to my epiſtle, ſince I own myſelf, at preſent, unfit for any other ſubject: Adieu then, my dear friend—a ſhort abſence, and a few

reaſonable reflections, will, I hope, reſtore me to my uſual compoſure. —What does this imply? Is it not to own—what ridiculous, ſtrange, incoherent ſtuff I write to-day! Let me haſten to ſubſcribe my name, leſt I ſhould farther expoſe my folly.—Once more adieu.

HARRIOT FITZROY.

Miſs HARRIOT FITZROY, *to Miſs* EMILIA SPENCER.

YOUR lover, my dear Emilia, for I am daily more confirmed in my opinion that he is ſo; is ſurely the moſt reſtleſs of mortals; he is already viſibly tired of Derby—what a mortification

a mortification to us females! I, indeed, who know that the reaſon of his impatience to leave us is in conſideration of his well placed attachment to Spencer Hall, have generoſity enough to forgive him, but the other ſlighted fair ones will not, I believe, be ſo placable, after all their kind endeavours to render this part of the world agreeable to him. Better had it been for many tender hearts if theſe two ſwains had never come amongſt us. Mr. Thornton has had his day, but he is now out of date, and nothing is at preſent talked of but the handſome ſtrangers. The ladies are divided in their opinions, two parties are formed, and 'tis no eaſy matter to ſay which is the moſt powerful. Thoſe who are ambitious, and prefer a difficult conqueſt, ſet up for Mr. Durant, over whoſe gay

indifference, they do not despair to triumph in time, though every art has, hereunto, proved unsuccessful. On the other hand, Mr. Lenox's politeness, his fine person, and the uncommonly gallant manner with which he treats every lady without distinction, has procured him universal approbation. Every one hoping, by her superior charms, that an admiration, which is now too defusive, will at last centre only in her. Will you not ask under whose banner your friend has enlisted herself? Perhaps you can already give a tolerable guess; but I, you know, am out of the question. Admiration, indeed, I may bestow, but no more, as I value my peace; yet were I free—but as I am not, such a supposition is needless. Do you remember what you once told me, that my first passion would be my last?

laſt? I was thinking of that propheſy of yours this morning, and not without uneaſineſs.—Yer, why?—Would you were here, my dear, I want to aſk you a few queſtions—but, I don't know how it is—was I ever reſerved before? Yet I cannot now prevail on myſelf to—tis no matter, they are nor very material, Mr. Brandon will ſoon be here and then my doubts will be ſatisfied. I muſt, however, frankly own, that it would have been better for me had I never ſeen Mr. Lenox.—Don't rally me on this free confeſſion, for I fear your pity will be more ſeaſonable; it will, I feel, coſt me a little painful ſtruggling, but I am determined to conquer. I have nothing to reproach myſelf with in regard to my behaviour to him, ſince it is perfectly cool and reſerved; his to me is ſo myſterious, that I don't

know what to make of it, yet, upon the whole, I have reaſon to believe I am not indifferent to him. This makes me doubly cautious in my conduct, for, ah! my dear Emilia! what would become of my heart were he to attack it? Dangerous as he is, even now, how ſhould I defend myſelf againſt his eloquence? For fear of the worſt I ſhun every opportunity of being alone with him. To Mr. Thornton, who ſtill continues to perſecute me, I can liſten without danger, and for that reaſon I ſuffer his aſſiduities as the beſt expedient to ſave me from the other, for the believing him a favoured rival, will moſt likely deter Mr. Lenox from encouraging a paſſion for me. Judge how much I dread his power, when I ſubmit to ſo diſagreeable a reſource! My ſiſter, deceived by the affected

complacency

complacency with which I liſten to Mr. Thornton, ſpares no perſuaſions to confirm me in his favour. O that Mr. Brandon were here, to put an end to my painful reſtraint! My reaſon would add another wiſh, but my heart rejects it. Yet, ought I not to deſire the abſence of a perſon who is become ſo dangerous to my repoſe? Mr. Durant talks of leaving Derby in a few days, but his friend has buſineſs, it ſeems, that will detain him ſome weeks longer.

Laſt night a private ball was given by Sir William Courtney's family. Mr. Thornton, hearing we were to be there, ſent a billet early in the morning to engage me as his partner. I could not refuſe, but foreſeeing that, by this means, I ſhould paſs a very diſagreeable evening, I would have made the head-ach a pretence for ſtaying

ing at home, had not a foolish desire, which I could not conquer, of seeing Mr. Lenox, prevailed on me to submit to the mortification.

As I expected, I found both him and Mr. Durant at Sir William's. The former was coming to pay his compliments to me, but on seeing the officious Thornton striding away with the same design, he turned upon his heel, and whether he intended it or not I cannot tell, but I own I was sufficiently mortified on his addressing a very pretty young lady at the other end of the room, to whom he seemed particularly attached the whole evening, so that I had hardly an opportunity of speaking to him. Mr. Durant was more complaisant, and frequently left his partner, though one of his greatest admirers, to give me his company. Your friend, said I, forcing

forcing a ſmile, ſeems very attentive to the fair lady he dances with, why do you not follow his example? Miſs Warren is little inferior to her in beauty, don't you think ſo? O, without doubt, anſwered he, I am quite of your opinion. Why that arch look, then? ſaid I, there's no knowing when you are ſerious. O, returned he, ſmiling, I am always ſerious on ſerious ſubjects, and what can be more ſo than this we are now diſcuſſing? You may laugh, ſaid I, but I'll anſwer for it the lady would think it a matter of no ſmall importance whether you determined in her favour or the other; ſhe will hardly pardon your gay inſenſibility, your diſpoſition ſeems to be very different from that of your friend. In ſome things, I believe, it is, ſaid he. It would, I fear, be but a bad way of paying my court

to the ladies were I to own in what. Yet, returned I, you take but little pains in your behaviour to conceal it. The more's my misfortune, said he; I am a very unhappy fellow not to be able, after the amazing pains I take to gain the favour of the ladies, to be so unsuccessful as I acknowledge myself. O, to be sure, you are much to be pitied in that respect, said I, but Mr. Lenox is, I fancy, a general admirer, and as our sex are naturally grateful, he will consequently be generally admired. You have formed a very just notion of him, returned Mr. Durant; scarce any female but has some charms, in his opinion; yet I believe, his heart is at last beginning to make a distinction that will, for the future, confine it to one object only. It is easy to guess who that favoured object is, said I, but I do

not

not think his conſtancy is much to be depended on. You gueſs who it is, then? cried Mr. Durant, looking archly at me; may I venture to plead for your intereſt in his favour? I am too little acquainted with the lady, anſwered I, to make any ſuch promiſe. Yet, ſaid he, the ſucceſs of his paſſion depends only on you.—On me? cried I; I ſhould never have thought of that. No, to be ſure, replied Mr. Durant — O, Miſs Harriot! Miſs Harriot! After owning that you gueſſed the object of his flame, why this affected ignorance? But let him plead his own cauſe, I may perhaps rather retard than forward it, by my officiouſneſs. I have no great talent for theſe love-affairs. I could no longer miſtake his meaning, and to avoid a farther explanation, endeavoured to change the ſubject. Miſs Warren,

juſt

juſt then joining us, obliged him likewiſe to drop it. Ah, have I found my ſtrayed ſheep! cried that lady. I was juſt going to ſend out a hue and cry after you, Mr. Durant. Then I hope, ſaid he, you will call your neighbours and friends to rejoice with you, that that which was loſt is found. I muſt firſt be aſſured, anſwered ſhe, that I receive you whole and entire as when you left me. Examine me then, ſaid he, ſmiling, you will find no part wanting. I don't know that, returned ſhe, you have been in company of one who has frequently been accuſed of ſtealing hearts, and if you return to me without that I would not give a fig for you. How can you ſuppoſe ſuch a thing poſſible, ſaid he, after the precaution you took to ſecure it before I left you? If you ſet no value on me without it, give

it

it me back, and do not endeavour to throw the guilt off yourſelf by accuſing another of a theft which you are conſcious of having committed. I don't know who you left it with, ſaid ſhe, but my conſcience acquits me, for that I have it not at preſent is but too certain. I ſhall be drawn into a fine ſcrape, ſaid I, ſmiling; a heart is miſſing, and though I may be acquitted of the theft, yet, if it is not found, I ſhall perhaps be accuſed of receiving ſtolen goods. And juſtly too, I fear, returned Miſs Warren, for whoever committed the robbery, I have all the reaſon in the world to believe it is at preſent in your poſſeſſion. What ſay you, Mr. Durant? I ſay, anſwered he, that you certainly have it between you, and that I inſiſt upon reſtitution; if not of the very thing, at leaſt of ſomething equivolent

to

to it in value. And at what price do you eſtimate it? cried I. O, ſaid he, tis above all price, I muſt be a loſer, give me what you will; but to compromiſe the affair, I'll condeſcend to take yours, and my ſmart little partner's here, in return. Unconſcionable wretch! cried Miſs Warren; I'd ſee you hanged firſt.

What ſay you, Miſs Harriot, may I be permitted to aſk the ſubject of your diſpute? ſaid Mr. Lenox, who juſt then joined us. A very intereſting one, anſwered Mr. Durant: I have been endeavouring to bring a pair of criminals to juſtice—aye you may ſmile, ladies, added he; innocent as they look, would you believe it? They have, between them, robbed me of my heart, and now refuſe either to reſtore it, or to give me their own in exchange. O, there is no juſtice to be

be expected from theſe fair agreſſors, ſaid Mr. Lenox, or I would join in the proſecution, ſince I have a crime of the ſame nature to lay to one of their charges—He looked at me, adding—but I believe I had better put up with my loſs, than venture to engage farther with ſo powerful an adverſary. You are very gallant, gentlemen, ſaid I, but you, Mr. Lenox, ſhould be more ſparing of your compliments, the evening is not half ſpent, and I doubt not your partner will afford you ſufficient employment for them. He was going to anſwer, when ſeeing Mr. Thornton approaching, And here is one, ſaid he, going to join you, from whom they will be far more acceptable than from me. He turned to leave me, as he ſpoke, and hardly opened his lips to me for the reſt of the evening.

Ah,

Ah, my dear Emilia, to what a painful ſituation am I reduced! But I muſt, I will conquer this imprudent weakneſs.—Adieu, write to me, adviſe me how to act. Do not ſpare me, but help me, by every wiſe argument you can collect, to get the better of this folly. Yet, let it be with your uſual ſweetneſs, for I ſtand greatly in need of conſolation, and none can ſo effectually adminiſter it as you who are ſo dear to,

Your affectionate,

Harriot Fitzroy.

Miſs

Miſs HARRIOT FITZROY, *to Miſs* EMILIA SPENCER.

A Thouſand thanks to my deareſt friend for her ſenſible letter—You have greatly ſtrengthened my wavering reſolution. Yes, Emilia, duty ſhall, for once, triumph over love. A promiſe to a dying parent—ah! could I, dare I think of breaking it?—Then the joy it would give my ſiſter!—You have confirmed my ſuſpicion in regard to her—Artful as ſhe is, ſelf intereſt is but too viſibly the motive of her conduct to me. What but that could make her ſo warm an advocate for Mr. Thornton, from whoſe former behaviour to her it is not in nature ſhe ſhould like? The tranſition was too ſudden—

From

From rage at her diſappointment, to be in ſo ſhort a time thus cordially reconciled to him, is impoſſible. A ſlighted paſſion does not ſo ſoon maſter its reſentment. I muſt be upon my guard; an enemy, diſguiſed under the ſpecious maſk of friendſhip, is doubly dangerous. Again I repeat a wiſh that has ſo long been fruitleſs.—Would to heaven Mr. Brandon were come! Buſineſs, and the death of his uncle, are his pretences for this tedious delay; ſo he tells my ſiſter, to whom he ſometimes, condeſcends to write. I have a great curioſity to ſee his letters, but as ſhe does not make the offer, I don't know how to aſk that favour. Yet I fear ſhe conceals ſome things from me, that it would be for his intereſt I ſhould know. I am only ſlightly mentioned in them, as ſhe would make me believe,

lieve, but ſurely policy, if no other motive, would induce him to feign a little tenderneſs for one he has ſo long been taught to conſider as his future wife, and a wife too, to whom he was ſo far from making any objections, from the character my dear father gave him of me, that I was aſſured he embraced the propoſal with grateful joy. But then, indeed, his circumſtances are greatly altered ſince that time. His voyage, that was undertaken with a view to profit, has by the death of his uncle, been converted into a tour of pleaſure, and he may now, perhaps, wiſh to chuſe for himſelf: Though ſhould even that be the caſe, 'tis no reaſon why he ſhould delay his return, as the engagement on his part is but a conditional one, though mine is abſolute. He is ſtill at liberty if, when he ſees me,

the poor girl ſhould not happen to ſtrike his fancy. In the ſhattered condition his fortune was, when his dying father left him dependant on the friendſhip of mine, ſuch an alliance was deemed above his hopes, and a very uncommon inſtance of generoſity, a generoſity that few people would imitate, whatever value they might have for their friends—but my father beſt knew his own motives. Indeed, he had long known and eſteemed Mr. Brandon's father, who, by all account, was every way worthy of his regard. That gentleman was of a good family, but unfortunately diſpleaſed his father, by marrying againſt his conſent, nor would he ever be reconciled to him, though he was once his favourite. When he died, he left every thing to his eldeſt ſon, who proved not a kinder brother than

he

he had been a parent, ſo that Mr. Brandon was reduced to great diſtreſs. My father, who, for ſome years before his death, enjoyed a poſt under the government, which obliged him to reſide three months in every year in London, became acquainted with him there, and, pleaſed with an opportunity of relieving merit in diſtreſs, did all in his power to eſtabliſh his fortune by his credit and intereſt; but Mr. Brandon died before he could reap the fruit of his generoſity, leaving to his care an only ſon, a charge that no perſon was ever more fit to be intruſted with. My ſiſter, who, you know, is much older than me, for two or three years before my father's death, had, at his deſire, accompanied him to town, as my mother's health would not permit her to take that journey. It was there

ſhe had an opportunity of becoming acquainted with Mr. Brandon, of whoſe education my father took the greateſt care, ſending him abroad as ſoon as it was compleat, not only for his profit but improvement. Often did my ſiſter congratulate me on the happy proſpect of my being allied to a young gentleman of his merit, yet ſhe ſeems now to have forgot that ever ſhe ſpoke in his favour.

Some of theſe particulars, my dear Emilia, I may perhaps have troubled you with before, but to others you were, till now a ſtranger, and I think it neceſſary that you ſhould be acquainted with every circumſtance of the affair, that you may be the better able to adviſe me how to act in it. I might add too, that my father, juſt before he expired, in the preſence of my mother and ſiſter, taking my hand,

hand, with a look that I ſhall never forget; In a few minutes, my dear Harriot, ſaid he, your parent will be no more—From the dutiful affection you have ever ſhown me, I am convinced you will mourn my loſs, but dry up your tears, my beloved child, the debt of nature muſt be paid. I could have wiſhed, indeed, had it pleaſed heaven, that I had lived to ſee you and your ſiſter happily ſettled in the world. The fortune I leave you, though a ſecurity from many evils, may yet ſubject you to others, from which, even prudence will hardly be able to guard you. But for you, my dear Harriot, I have endeavoured ſo to diſpoſe it, that had I lived I could not have expected your lot to have been more fortunate. From a thorough conviction of the worthineſs of the choice I have made, I conjure

you, as you value my bleſſing and your own happineſs, that you do not fruſtrate my intention in favour of him whom, with the utmoſt reaſon, I think worthy of becoming my ſon. Studious not only of his intereſt, but much more of your welfare, I expect your chearful compliance with my laſt requeſt, which is, that you make me a ſolemn promiſe of marrying Mr. Brandon. I have taken a precaution in my will, which yet, from your approved duty to me I ſhould hope to be the leaſt part of your inducement to obedience. I can have no motive but your happineſs in what I do; give me then, my ever affectionate Harriot, this laſt teſtimony of your obedience and I ſhall die in peace, aſſured that my beloved child is not left without a worthy and grateful protector,

tector, in a man who is formed to make her happy.

What could I ſay, my dear Emilia? At ſuch a time was it poſſible to refuſe his requeſt?—No, 'tis paſt, and let what will be the conſequence I never can repent, but rather rejoice that it was in my power to ſweeten, by my chearful compliance to his commands, the laſt moments of a parent, ſo juſtly, ſo tenderly beloved. When my ungovernable heart attempts to ſeduce me from the path of duty, the recalling this moving ſcene ſhall be my reſource. It may murmer, but it muſt ſubmit.—O reaſon! aſſiſt me to baniſh the idea of this charming intruder, this too lovely object that deſtroys my reſt! What an amazing progreſs has he already made in my unguarded affections! A thouſand proofs of his merit,

in spite of my utmost endeavours, are daily encreasing my esteem for him. 'Tis not his person only — indeed my friend I should judge myself inexcusable, was my love — yes love, I fear I must call it—so lightly founded — but I have seen in him such uncommon instances of generosity and of sensibility, that it is not possible to refuse him one's regard.

I shall tire you, my dear Emil'a, so much as I write about him, and so little of another, in whom you are, doubtless, much more interested; but I hope you will pardon the omission, in consideration of a piece of news I am going to tell you, that, I am sure, will be agreeable.

Mr. Durant set off this morning for the grove. — What say you to this?—But you'll have so much to say to him that, I fear, you'll have

but

but little time for converſing with your friend, at leaſt till the happy flutter of your ſpirits is ſomewhat abated. Many ſorrowful hearts has he left behind him at Derby. Miſs Warren is inconſolable. She began to think, and indeed I was in ſome doubts myſelf, from his behaviour to her, whether he did not like her. She has a good deal of vivacity, you know, and were it not for a too great ſhare of affectation, would be very agreeable. 'Tis certain ſhe was the only lady at Derby of whom Mr. Durant took any particular notice, nevertheleſs, I believe, he returns to you perfectly indifferent about any body but your fair ſelf. You ought, therefore, in gratitude, to make him ſome return for ſuch uncommon conſtancy, a conſtancy that no art was wanting to deſtroy. He is a favourite with me on his own ac-

count, and were not that the caſe, would ſtill be ſo on another's—need you aſk on whoſe, when you know that Mr. Lenox calls him friend?

Adieu, my dear, nothing but gaiety and amuſement is thought of here, though I, alas! have loſt my uſual reliſh for it. It is quite the taſte to give private balls: If one does it the reſt muſt follow of courſe. Mr. Tyrell, who is a perſon of too little conſequence with me to be often the ſubject of my pen, obſtinately refuſes to accept of a freedom to which I would very willingly reſtore him, and ſtill continues to profeſs himſelf my lover. He thinks it is now time to ſhow the elegance of his taſte, and is, accordingly, going to treat us with a kind of rural ball at his country ſeat. Many ladies are invited, but he has politely given me to underſtand that

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it is on my account. He has, for ſome days, been inſignificantly buſy in making preparations. If we may believe him, it will be ſuch an entertainment as was never before either ſeen or heard of. Even the ladies dreſſes are to be directed by him. We are all to be ſhepherds and ſhepherdeſſes. Fooliſh enough, you'll ſay, but let the man be indulged in his whim, ſince it is an innocent one. Good ſoul, to do him juſtice, there is no great fear of his promoting any other, 'tis as harmleſs a creature as one can deſire, but rather from conſtitution than principle—What a length of ſcrawl!

Adieu,

HARRIOT FITZROY.

Miſs Harriot Fitzroy, *to Miſs* Emilia Spencer.

NOW, Emilia, take the particulars of our ball. I will not anticipate, though my heart has ſuffered greatly.

In one coach went Miſs Warren, Mrs Hamilton, late Miſs Vernon, my ſiſter and your friend. In obedience to the whimſical directions of Mr. Tyrell, we were dreſſed with all the neatneſs and ſimplicity of country maidens—a deſcription of mine will give you an idea of the reſt.

I wore a light blue petticoat, a white luſtring jacket;

My hair in artleſs ringlets flow'd,
And charms beyond the reach of art beſtow'd.

Take

Take that for the ſake of the rhime—but, ſeriouſly, I think I never looked better in my life, even when aſſiſted by every ornament that one would imagine would heighten one's charms. I had almoſt forgot to tell you that, as an improvement of his plan, Mr. Tyrell had deſired us to wear maſks. We were to ſpend the whole day at his ſeat, which is at no great diſtance from Derby. Early in the morning, therefore, we ſet out, and got there to breakfaſt. That it might not be known who we were, our carriage was left at ſome diſtance from the houſe, and we walked the remainder of the way. A great deal of company were already aſſembled in a large drawing room, where an elegant breakfaſt was ſet out to the beſt advantage. An excellent band of muſick played too, during the repaſt. The only inconvenience

convenience was our being obliged to ſit like a ſet of nuns with our veils on, which was rather diſagreeable, as the day was warm, and eating in that manner encreaſed the heat; however, we were obliged to ſubmit to that, for fear of being known. The journey had, in general, given us ſuch good appetites, that nothing very ſprightly paſſed during our breakfaſt. When it was over, we reſumed our maſks, and were led by the maſter of the ceremony into a ſpacious park, one part of which is parted with a thick grove of trees, that afforded an agreeable ſhelter from the heat. In this little wilderneſs were ſeveral verdant ſeats of moſs, and on the branches of the trees were hung cages, in which were various kinds of birds, whoſe warblings made a pleaſing addition to the concert that proceeded from a great

number

number of inſtruments which, with the performers, were placed ſo as not to be ſeen by the company. To do Mr. Tyrell juſtice, his entertainment far ſurpaſſed my expectation.

After wandering about in that delightful grove for ſome time, and chatting agreeably enough with different maſks, a propoſal was made by Mr. Tyrell (who alone appeared in his proper perſon, that he might the better pay his compliments to his gueſts) that thoſe of the company, who could ſing, would greatly add to the entertainment, if they would compleat the melody, which was ever deficient, if not vocal as well as inſtrumental. Every body was ſilent to this requeſt, when a young gentleman, of an uncommonly graceful appearance, came up to me, who was ſeated between Miſs Warren and my ſiſter. If I may judge,

judge, fair nymph, ſaid he, by the harmony and ſweetneſs of your voice in ſpeaking, no perſon here is more capable of granting the requeſted favour than yourſelf. I would ſue for it on my knees, added he, though I know the danger to which I ſhall be expoſed; for what heart can reſiſt the united powers of harmony and beauty? You have a very lively imagination, returned I, or you could not talk with ſuch raptures of a beauty you have never ſeen, and a voice you have never heard. The voice I often have, ſaid he, and did it not this inſtant thrill to my heart? Then for your beauty, though part is concealed, yet enough is ſeen to charm the ſenſes, even without the help of imagination: Though, from this enchanting ſample, continued he, taking my hand, it is eaſy to form an idea of the reſt. How ill, cried I, withdrawing

withdrawing my hand, does this courtly language become that ſimple attire! From your appearance one might expect ſincerity. You ſhould either quit that, or flattery, for nothing can be worſe ſuited to each other. If I flattered, ſaid he, I ſhould deſerve this rebuke, but truſt me, the ſimple ſwain though bred in obſcurity, has yet as juſt an idea of beauty, and a breaſt as ſuſceptible of its impreſſions, as the courtier, and what he feels he will expreſs, if not with ſo much ſtudied elegance, yet in ſuch glowing language as only can flow from the heart. Accuſe me not, then, lovely maid! of a deceit to which my honeſt mind is a ſtranger. Your charms may make me eloquent, but are too perfect to leave room for flattery. Come, cried Mr. Tyrell, interrupting him, a truce with your fine ſpeeches — Will the lady

ſing?

ſing? Every body is attentively waiting for the favour. Aſk her, ſaid the ſtranger, perhaps your intreaties may prevail, though mine have failed. No, ſaid I, tis with your requeſt I comply; but as I have the ſame reaſon to judge favourably of *your* voice that you had of *mine*, I think a duet will be ſtill more acceptable to the company, and I would willingly have ſomething elſe to keep me in countenance, beſides my maſk. He bowed his aſſent, and taking my hand, led me to a deſk on which was a variety of muſick. I deſired my ſwain to chuſe what was moſt agreeable to him—you may believe the compliment was returned—The chaplet happened to be uppermoſt, and as it was in the rural taſte, I, without farther ceremony, turned to—*Contented all day I could ſit by your ſide, &c.* —though no violent favourite of mine,

but

but I was very indifferent about the matter. Oh, my dear Emilia, what a voice was his! what I felt while he ſung is not to be expreſſed. Alas! I could afterwards but too well account for my emotions! The ſtring that tied his maſk breaking, juſt as we got to the laſt line of our duet, off it fell, and diſcovered the fineſt face in the world—Need I, after this, tell you it was Mr. Lenox? He haſtily endeavoured to re-place it. 'Tis too late, ſaid I; I know you, to ſpeak in the true maſquerade ſtile. And I know you too, whiſpered he, preſſing my hand. Could that ſhape, that inſinuating voice, belong to any one but the lovely Harriot? No diſguiſe can conceal you from the penetrating eyes of love. O Emilia! what became of me at that fatally tender moment! never did my heart experience ſo painful a ſtruggle,

as

as when I forced myself to affect indifference; yet that cruel sacrifice did my rigorous prudence exact from me. I was obliged to leave him abruptly, and well was it for me that my mask concealed my emotions. I resumed my seat, where I received the thanks and unmerited applause of the company, to which you may believe I gave but little attention, my eyes involuntarily following their beloved object, who soon after disappeared. In vain did I look out for the elegant shepherd in green, who deigned not again to grace the assembly. From the moment of his absence my gaiety forsook me, I listened in silence to the insipid things that were said to me—insipid I call them, though they might be very witty for any thing I knew—The musick, the grove, every thing was changed—"for damon

"there

"there I ſought in vain."—The enchantment was broke, and I found myſelf melancholy in the midſt of mirth and gaiety. The dinner was elegant I belive, but every thing was loſt on me.—How tedious did the remainder of the day appear!

The ball began in a ſpacious room, one end of which opened into a broad gravel walk, on each was a row of trees whoſe branches meeting a great number of lamps, made it as light as day, and had a very pretty effect. In the farther end of the apartment, which was very long, was an elegant cold collation, intermixed with a variety of flowers, and others hung in arches at a convenient diſtance over the tables. Nothing could be better diſpoſed—I ſhould never have imagined Mr. Tyrell had ſo fine a taſte. That gentleman came to me ſoon after the

the minuets began. As he was unmaſked, I had taken no trouble to conceal myſelf from him. I have been offered very tempting bribes, ſaid he, ſmiling, by a certain gentleman, if I would diſcover you to him, but you may believe he applied to one who was not very likely to grant his requeſt. We both aſpire to the ſame honour, but as I have the good fortune to get the ſtart of him, I hope you will condeſcend to favour me with your hand. 'Tis perfectly indifferent to me who I dance with, anſwered I, I can have no motives for refuſing you, but that it is known you honour me with ſome partiality, and that may the more readily lead them to a diſcovery who I am. This was but a bungling kind of excuſe, Emilia, but in reality I would rather have talked nonſenſe, than danced with him.

him. Bad as it was, the honeſt man was ſatisfied with it, and gave up his requeſt, to my great joy. But who, added I,—yet 'tis no great matter. You was going to aſk, ſaid Mr. Tyrell, who the ſaid gentleman was—Ah! Miſs Harriot! to what am I to attribute this curioſity? To whatever you pleaſe, ſaid I, a little peeviſhly; but you ſee it is very moderate, ſince I can hardly take the trouble of aſking you. For that reaſon, reſumed he, I will the more readily ſatisfy it. The perſon was no other than—but, continued he, ſhew your penetration, by finding out who he is. I'll tell you his dreſs—here he comes—that is him in blue. Which? cried I, there are two dreſſed exactly alike. I proteſt ſo there is, ſaid he, I never took notice of that 'till this minute—nay, now I am as much at a loſs as your-

ſelf—

ſelf—they are much of a ſize too. As he ſpoke, one of them came to me and begged the honour of dancing a minuet with me. He acquitted himſelf ſo gracefully, that I ſoon began to ſuſpect it was no other than the charming Lenox. When we ſat down, I ſtrove to engage him in converſation, believing his voice would convince me whether my conjectures were well founded, and I thought he ſpoke in a feigned one, that I might not diſcover him. This ſtill kept me in a little doubt, but pleaſed at the bare poſſibility of its being him, I reſumed my uſual chearfulneſs. He attached himſelf to me for the remainder of the evening, and though his voice ſeemed different from what it uſed to be, yet a ſimilarity of ſentiments between Mr. Lenox and the perſon I ſpoke to, ſoon perſuaded me I was

not

not miſtaken. We danced together, but more frequently ſat down at my requeſt, on a pretence of fatigue, though in reality, becauſe I preferred the pleaſure of liſtening to him to any other entertainment. His reſemblance followed us wherever we went, he having engaged no partner, that he might be at more liberty to watch our behaviour. This made me ſuſpect that it was Mr. Thornton, and for that reaſon I took as much pains to avoid him, as he did to obſerve us. Towards the concluſion of the ball, my ſiſter joined us, and entered into converſation with my partner. The perſon I took for Mr. Thornton ſeized that opportunity of ſpeaking to me, but, good heavens! what was my emotion when his well known voice convinced me I had been deceived! and that him I had ſhuned with ſo

much averſion, was no other than Mr. Lenox!

I would not interrupt your happineſs, madam, ſaid he cooly, but as I ſee your favourite is otherwiſe engaged, I would juſt hint a congratulatory compliment, on your ſudden change, from coyneſs and diſdain, to tenderneſs and ſenſibility. Believe me, you are greatly indebted to Mr. Thornton, ſince your charms are doubly attractive, now he has taught you to aſſume this gentle, winning air, inſtead of that haughty one, that lately diſtinguiſhed you, and which his eloquence has ſo ſoon ſubdued. I attempted to anſwer, but my tongue faultered, ſtung with his unjuſt reproach. I had beſides, hardly ſtrength to ſupport myſelf. You deign not to anſwer me, reſumed he, but I will not detain you—ſee, your expecting lover has

has ſhook off the intruder! — Go, madam, renew your mutual felicity— never more ſhall my fruitleſs complaints interrupt it—adieu.—O, lovely Harriot, did you know what I ſuffer— but no matter, my diſintereſted heart will ſtill experience a gleam of joy in reflecting that, whatever miſery my unſucceſsful paſſion dooms me to, you at leaſt are happy. Farewell, madam—to-morrow I ſhall leave this country, and with it every thing my ſoul holds dear on earth. I may not, perhaps, have the honour of ſeeing you again before my departure, tho' I ſhall pay my reſpects to Miſs Fitzroy before I go. I may add, that my weakneſs would perſuade me to delay as long as poſſible a laſt adieu. I ſhall do myſelf the honour of waiting on you to-morrow morning, but leſt any engagement ſhould deprive me of

the happineſs of ſeeing you then—The impertinent Thornton joining us while he ſpoke, he added no more, but profoundly bowing, haſtily left the room, while I, more dead than alive, ſunk into a chair and could hardly keep myſelf from fainting.

Emilia, my doom is paſt—'tis all over—and my future days will be one continued ſcene of miſery—my grief is inexpreſſible—pity

Your afflicted,

HARRIOT FITZROY.

HENRY

HENRY BRANDON, *Eſq. to* EDWARD DURANT, *Eſq.*

MY hopes are vaniſhed, but I will ſtrive to bear my diſappointment like a philoſopher. I ſhall leave Derby immediately—I had convincing proofs laſt night. I don't, however, repent of what I have done, miſerable as I am, 'tis nothing to what I muſt have ſuffered had I followed your advice and married her when her affections are ſo ſtrongly engaged to another. No, periſh the thought of ſuch a ſelf-intereſted meanneſs. She *is*—ſhe *ſhall* be free for me—though her duty would, I believe, ſtill induce her to make a ſacrifice of her love, ſince what but a

regard to that, could make her a moment delay the happineſs of my rival?—O, Ned, how lovely is her perſon! how far did ſhe ſurpaſs my expectations, greatly as they were raiſed by the report I had heard of her! Then how amiable is her diſpoſition!—But where is my pen wandering? Why do I thus dwell on the perfections I ſhould rather ſtrive to forget?—I hardly know what I write—I was going to repeat a converſation I had this morning with her ſiſter, but my heart is ſo wholly engroſſed with her dear idea, that I can neither talk nor think of any thing elſe.

After a ſleepleſs night, I went pretty early to their houſe, when Miſs Fitzroy only made her appearance. I aſked for her ſiſter and was told that ſhe was well, but being engaged in writing (to her lover I ſuppoſe,

ſuppoſe) had begged me to excuſe her ſeeing me before I went, and (how condeſcendingly kind!) that ſhe wiſhed me a good journey. I am greatly obliged to her for this mortifying coolneſs. I hope my pride will enable me to get the better of my paſſion.

So you are actually going to leave us? ſaid Miſs Fitzroy. Certainly, anſwered I, I have no farther buſineſs here. Your worthy father's intentions in my favour are intirely fruſtrated. I don't ſee that, ſaid ſhe, Harriot knows her duty, and will, I doubt not, fulfil her engagement, (though, I believe, not without a great deal of reluctance) if you think proper to diſcover yourſelf. I thought what would be the conſequence of your over delicacy. You did? ſaid I peeviſhly, for I was in a very ill

humour, as you may believe; then, madam, you may congratulate yourself on your sagacity. Really, cried she, with an affected laugh, for a man of your wisdom you have made but a bungling piece of work of this affair; why did not you boldly claim your legacy of a wife? What though another has her heart? Such a fortune as hers, sir, is of itself very well worthy of your acceptance.

But why am I troubling you, Ned, with the impertinent chat of a woman so little delicate in her sentiments as is this termagant sister of my Harriot? I shall only add, that we parted with great coolness on both sides, she having first, however, desired to know my final resolution with regard to her sister. I answered, that I was determined to release her from her engagement.

ment. She is at liberty to marry whom ſhe pleaſes, ſaid I, I give up my pretenſion to her. But how is ſhe to be certain of that? ſaid Miſs Fitzroy. Becauſe I ſay it, returned I, and I have too much honour to break my word. I repeat it again, I never will diſpute her choice. — Adieu, madam, you may now, as ſoon as you pleaſe, make her eaſy by this aſſurance, and need no longer conceal who I am—but I ſhall write to her myſelf, and ſave you that trouble. So ſaying I took my leave.

As ſoon as I got home, I wrote to the dear Harriot—She has my letter by this time, I ſuppoſe. Great will be her joy, no doubt, to find herſelf thus unexpectedly freed from her engagement. My too happy rival too—but I muſt not think of that,

or I ſhall grow diſtracted. Curſed—I will command my temper—dear Ned,

Adieu,

HENRY BRANDON.

HENRY BRANDON, *Eſq. to Miſs* HARRIOT FITZROY. *

Madam,

HAD you deigned to honour me with your preſence, this morning, I propoſed an explanation that would have ſaved you the trouble of this letter; but when I conſider the pleaſure the unexpected contents

* This letter was intercepted by Miſs Penelope Fitzroy, and never delivered to her ſiſter.

of

of it will give you, I am ſure this liberty will need no apology. O, Harriot! what a reſtraint do I put upon my heart, while I oblige it to affect this coolneſs! How different would its language be were it allowed to dictate to my pen! But why do I make a confeſſion ſo mortifying to my pride? To a pride that you have already taken ſo much pains to humble? With what flattering hopes did I come to Derby! How did I exult in the thoughts of ſeeing my lovely, long intended bride! Strongly prepoſſeſſed in her favour, by the reports I had heard, which yet came far ſhort of her perfections, I haſtened with eager impatience to be—alas! undone—for could I ſee you and not love? But what was my miſery, to find the heart I aſpired to, already in

the poſſeſſion of another! To find the hopes I had ſo fondly cheriſhed, at once thus cruelly diſappointed! No language can deſcribe what I ſuffer.—Forgive me, I will reſtrain my pen, the reſt of my letter ſhall merit your approbation, ſince it is to aſſure you, that I releaſe you from an engagement which alone delays your happineſs.—You are free, madam —duty is ſatisfied with the ſacrifice you have already made, I have put it out of your power to fulfil the reſt. Think not the man your father judged worthy of his regard, has ſo mean a ſpirit as to diſgrace his friendſhip, by being capable of acting mercenarily. Your fortune I deſpiſe—nor will I accept of your perſon, enchantly lovely as it is, ſince I am convinced another is in poſſeſſion of your

your heart. May you be happy, madam, whatever is the fate of,

Your

Moſt obedient ſervant,

HENRY BRANDON.

Miſs HARRIOT FITZROY, *to Miſs* EMILIA SPENCER.

AM I awake, Emilia? — O no, flatter me that I am only in a cruel dream. Alas! I cannot deceive myſelf—he is gone! Yes, my dear Emilia, he is gone, and I ſhall never ſee him more! that amiable, that worthy object of my tendereſt affections!—What language can give you an

an idea of my ſufferings?—He went too, without ſeeing me, perhaps offended at my ſeeming neglect. Little did he know that an illneſs, of which he was the cauſe, deprived me of that happineſs. I have ever ſince been confined to my apartment. My perverſe ſiſter too, now I ſtand moſt in need of her conſolation, has reſumed her ill-humour. When will my troubles have an end! Oh! that impertinent Thornton! Never more will I ſee him, if I can avoid it.

My dear Emilia, I can hardly hold my pen, write to me, and tell me if you have ſeen the charming Harry. He is moſt likely with his friend—try to undeceive him—yet to what purpoſe?—No, don't, I muſt try—Ah! what a fruitleſs taſk! but I muſt endeavour to drive him from my memory.

Adieu,

Adieu, my friend, I will follow your obliging example, and as you once told me you took care not to enlarge on ſubjects that gave you pain, leſt you ſhould infect me with your ſadneſs, neither will I, knowing the tender ſympathy you have for,

Your affectionate,

HARRIOT FITZROY.

Miſs Emilia Spencer, *to Miſs* Harriot Fitzroy.

DO not, my dear Harriot, reſtrain your pen from the generous conſideration you mention, I have a right to ſhare your grief—friendſhip demands it — why would you then unjuſtly deprive me of my prerogative? Give free vent to your ſorrows, and deny me not the pleaſure of a tender endeavour to ſooth you. Where ſhall we find conſolation but in each other? O, my dear girl! greatly do we both ſtand in need of it. Your once gay friend has lately had her ſhare of miſery; no ſooner do we ſubmit to that tyrant love than farewell peace. Too little guard

did

did I ſet upon my heart againſt a paſſion that has inſidiouſly ſtolen it. Truly did you warn me that it ſoon ceaſes to be an amuſement; alas! it is become too fatally ſerious for my repoſe, and you ſee the ſurpriſing effect it has already produced, for when did I ever aſſume ſo much gravity? After all, it ſits a little awkwardly on me—but let me try to account for this complaining ſtrain.

Mr. Durant returned more charming than ever in my eyes, and no wonder, ſince he redoubled his endeavours to pleaſe me: Nothing could be more reſpectfully tender than his behaviour. His natural indifference ſeemed to have given place to the warmeſt ſentiments in my favour—he neglected no opportunity of being in my company. A diſtinction ſo flattering, could not fail of exciting

envy

envy in thoſe he neglected for my ſake; but who would have expected, that becauſe Sidney was of that number, it ſhould convert my parent into an enemy? Who, had ſhe ſtudied my intereſt as ſuch, ſhould rather have rejoiced in the proſpect of an alliance that promiſed ſo much happineſs, not only from my favourable ſentiments of him, but in that more material article with them—intereſt; for ſuch a fortune as he is maſter of, is more than I am entitled to expect in the man who deigns to make me his choice. But, notwithſtanding this favourable circumſtance, my mother thought proper to expreſs her diſapprobation of his attachment to me. She had particular reaſons, ſhe ſaid, and very wiſe ones they were, *entre nous*, why the affair ſhould go no farther. I ventured to expoſtulate,

and

and aſked what objections ſhe could have to him, allowing he really meant me, which I much doubted, the honour of paying his ſerious addreſſes to me? The honour? returned ſhe, with an ill-natured ſmile, you did not uſe to be ſo humble in matters where it would much more have become you to diſplay it — but no wonder — a lover is ſo new a thing to you, and what you had ſo little reaſon to expect, that 'tis not ſurpriſing you ſhould eſteem it ſo great a favour, but don't be too grateful, girl, till you are more certain you have been obliged. You did well to expreſs a doubt, though, I believe, you have weakneſs enough to be eaſily convinced on that head: Yet, be that as it will, whether he is only diverting himſelf with your fooliſh vanity, or has ſo unaccountable a taſte as to be ſerious in his ridi-

culous

culous attachment to you, it is my will, that you do not give him any farther encouragement. I ſhall take care to forbid his impertinent viſits for the future; for, ſince your brother is gone, I know no buſineſs he has here. I ventured to hint, that we could not well break off our intimacy without apparent rudeneſs, ſince his behaviour had been ſo circumſpect as to leave no pretence for ſuch a conduct on our part; but this only ſerved to draw on me her ill-natured raillery. It was a pity, to be ſure, ſhe ſaid, that I ſhould ſo ſoon be deprived of my firſt lover, eſpecially as he would in all probability be my laſt too—but there was no help for it. I might, however, reap one advantage from her perverſeneſs, as I was always of a romantick turn, it would be a delightful opportunity for me

me to diſplay my eloquence on. You may now, continued ſhe, write to your friend, as you call her, and make a pretty ſtory of a cruel parent, who was ſo unnatural as to prevent your expoſing yourſelf. I durſt not anſwer, fearing my reſentment might hurry me too far. I left her, therefore, with a look of diſdain, which was not, perhaps, juſtifiable, conſidering the perſon to whom it was directed, but ſhe had tried my temper to the utmoſt, and I rather wonder at my patience, conſidering how little I excel in that virtue.

Next day I was informed, that my mother had had a private interview with Mr. Durant, wherein ſhe had given him to underſtand, that his future viſits would be diſagreeable. I was not indulged with the particulars of their conference, but only told in general,

ral, that all farther intimacy between him and our family, was at an end, and I was ordered, for the future, to look on him as a ſtranger, and to avoid every place where it was probable I might meet him. You may comfort yourſelf, ſaid my mother, that you will not long be under any reſtraint on his account, ſince I am told he is to leave the country in a few days. And yet the honeſt man ſeemed to be under no great concern, at the thoughts of leaving his *Dulcinea*—I'll lay my life he forgets her before he reaches the firſt ſtage of his journey.—But our poor Emilia, added ſhe, with an affected ſmile — I am going, interrupted I, ſpare your reflections, they are of as little advantage to yourſelf as me.—No, ſtay, cried ſhe, but if you would avoid my raillery ſtrive to give leſs cauſe for

for it. There is not, in my opinion, a more ridiculous creature in nature than a love-ſick girl, and ſuch, I can tell you, you give us but too much reaſon to think you to be, by the pretty penſive air you have aſſumed of late. Prithee, child, try to act a little more in character. Your former pertneſs, though bad enough, was better, however, than your preſent affected meekneſs. Conſider, girl, you are not over burthened with attractions, and if you lay aſide the few you have, you'll never ſtand a chance of retrieving the loſs, for which you are ſo inconſolable. I burſt into tears and left the room.

My ſpirits are much weakened, and now frequently deſert me though I ſtand more than ever in need of their aſſiſtance. Unhappily for me too, my beloved brother, the friend

that

that uſed to ſupport me under all my provoking tryals, is now returned to Oxford; you, now, are my only comforter—while I have your eſteem I cannot be altogether unhappy. Do not let me forfeit it by what I am going to tell you, make allowance for my diſagreeable ſituation, and the teaſing, not to ſay unnatural behaviour of my mother.

Soon after this diſmiſſion, Mr. Durant found means to convey a letter to me, in which he intreated me, in the moſt eloquent and perſuaſive manner, to favour him with a few moments private converſation, aſſureing me he had ſomething of conſequence to impart to me, adding too, that he could not prevail on himſelf to leave the country without the happineſs of ſeeing me firſt. I deliberated long in what manner I

ought

ought to act, and whether prudence would ſuffer me to comply with his requeſt. My mother had repeatedly commanded me never to ſee or ſpeak to him again, but love—you may gueſs on what I determined when I mention that—yes, my dear Harriot, I own that, overcome by my partiality for him, I ventured for once to tranſgreſs my duty, and met him at the time and place appointed, reſolving however to ſtay but a moment with him, only juſt to ſatisfy my curioſity in what he had to ſay to me. My diſobedience was ſeverely puniſhed. The perſon he had bribed to deliver his letter, too faithful to his miſtreſs, had betrayed his employer. The billet was ſhewn to her before I received it, as was likewiſe my anſwer. Little ſuſpecting any thing of that nature, I ſtole out unperceived,

as I imagined, but had not been a minute in the garden with Mr. Durant, before my mother made her appearance—you may believe no very agreeable scene ensued—'tis past description. My mother raved, Mr. Durant endeavoured to justify my conduct, but, too much exasperated at her treatment of me, dropped some severe and unguarded expressions that will, I doubt not, confirm her his enemy for life. The conclusion of the adventure was, my being loaded with reproaches, and finally locked into my apartment, from which I am not to be released till Mr. Durant has left the country. This is my present situation; luckily they have not deprived me of pen and ink, but have of every thing else they thought might amuse me, even the company of my sister. 'Tis now four days since my imprisonment begun,

and

and I have no proſpect of releaſe, but from an event that I dread more than my confinement. I ſcribble and ſing by turns, for I am always moſt muſically inclined when I am melancholy. The flowers of the foreſt is in immenſe favour with me at preſent; but, alas! the flower of the foreſt is now away!

Nothing vexes me more than not having it in my power to ſee Mr. Lenox before he goes. The requeſt you made, with regard to my clearing up the miſtake about Mr. Thornton, though immediately contradicted, is, I doubt not, what you would ſtill wiſh to have done; and, indeed, were it only for the dear Harry's ſake, who ſo tenderly loves you, 'tis a great pity that I have it not in my power, as it would be ſome conſolation for him to know, that though a prior engagement

muſt prevent your being his, yet your heart is not the prize of his now envied rival.

What a train of vile attendants is this ſame love accompanied with!—Would I were free again in every ſenſe of the word! But, in ſome reſpects, that wiſh comes, I fear, alas! too late.

I do not know when I ſhall be permitted to ſend this letter to you, but I will continue to write, with the pleaſing hope that our correſpondence will not long be interrupted. Till then adieu, and believe me

Ever yours,

EMILIA SPENCER.

Miſs

Miſs PENELOPE FITZROY, *to Mr.* WEST.

BE ſatisfied—you are at laſt revenged of your enemy, thanks to my fertile genius. Mr. Brandon once diſappointed your hopes, and now his own have met with no better ſucceſs, though he was, perhaps, more worthy to ſucceed, ſince, but for your own indiſcretions, you might ſtill have retained my favour, and though his officious friendſhip, as he called it, made him diſcover your real character to my father, and thereby prevented a marriage which, indeed, from your extravagance and other vices, would perhaps have been attended with that miſery, the proſpect of which induced Mr. Brandon to take the mea-

ſures he did to prevent it; yet when left to my own diſpoſal—but I will not give you hopes till I ſee greater proofs of your reformation. I can never forgive him for expoſing me to my father. But for his meddling friendſhip, I had never forfeited that character of diſcretion which gave my pride ſuch a triumph over others who enjoy a leſs ſhare of diſſimulation, and who have not ſagacity enough to know the uſe of it. From that time I viſibly loſt ground in my father's affection, and that little ſyren, my ſiſter, became his favourite; but ſhe ſhall rue, nay ſhe has already experienced the fatal diſtinction.

She loves Mr. Brandon, and he doats on her, but by my artifice their engagement is at an end. Thus am I, in ſome meaſure, revenged on both. I will tell you the particulars ſome

other

other time, at preſent my whole attention is employed on a project in which you muſt aſſiſt me; if it is ſucceſsful my vengeance will be compleat.

Mr. Brandon has been at Derby, has ſeen his miſtreſs, but from a fooliſh delicacy, choſe not to diſcover himſelf, till he knew how her heart was affected towards him. I contrived to make him jealous, fortune aſſiſted me in every thing, he left the country in deſpair, having firſt wrote to my ſiſter to releaſe her from her engagement, and aſſured me he would never ſee her again, if he could avoid it. I intercepted his letter; Harriot is ſtill ignorant that it was Mr. Brandon; nobody can reveal the ſecret but myſelf, as he is an utter ſtranger at Derby and has been abroad for ſeveral years. And now, if you are

not very ſtupid indeed, you may begin to gueſs at my project. If my ſiſter marries any other than Mr. Brandon, her fortune becomes mine, or whether ſhe marries another or not, ſhe ſtill forfeits it if ſhe refuſes him. She every day expects the arrival of her intended huſband, 'tis eaſy therefore to impoſe you on her for him. As you are not burthened with one of the moſt tender conſciences, I dare ſay you will have no objections to practice a little artifice by which you ſhall be a gainer. Make your own terms, and, if not too extravagant, be aſſured of my compliance. You are the fitteſt perſon in the world to engage in this adventure, not only becauſe you have a tolerable ſhare of impudence — modeſt aſſurance I ſhould ſay — but becauſe knowing Mr. Brandon, and having learnt from me every particu-

lar

lar of his hiſtory, you can be at no loſs to perſonate him. But, leſt any circumſtance ſhould have eſcaped your memory, I ſhall take care to refreſh it by proper inſtructions, as ſoon as you have informed me you will agree to my ſcheme. Remember, however, that I have no intention you ſhould marry my ſiſter; on the contrary, if I ſee ſuch an event likely to take place, I will certainly diſcover you, however it may expoſe myſelf, for I do not take all this pains to ſuffer her fortune to be in poſſeſſion of another: But my hopes are founded on the knowledge I have of her temper and taſte, which give me the greateſt reaſon in the world to believe that, diſappointed in the idea ſhe had formed of Mr. Brandon, finding your perſon and manner ſo different from what I know ſhe imagines his to be, I

have reaſon, I ſay, to believe ſhe will rather forfeit every thing than conſent to be yours, eſpecially if you follow the directions I ſhall give you in my next, which will be to aſſume ſuch a behaviour as cannot fail to diſguſt her.

Write to me immediately on the receipt of this, for I am all impatience for the commencement of our plot. If you behave as you ſhould do, who knows but I may again receive you into favour? You talk much of penitence and reformation — don't be too ſanguine in your hopes, however, I make no raſh promiſes, as I ſhall ſoon be miſtreſs of ſuch a fortune that will, I doubt not, procure me ſuch a train of ſuiters as will puzzle my choice. You are ſure, at leaſt, of a reward that, in your circumſtance, muſt be extremely welcome. — Adieu. I

ſubſcribe

ſubſcribe myſelf your friend as you may hereafter merit that title.

PENELOPE FITZROY.

P. S. I have juſt learned, from a perſon I employed, that Mr. Brandon is again returned to Paris.—So much the better—we have then nothing to fear.

Miſs Emilia Spencer, *to Miſs* Harriot Fitzroy.

Friday.

"LET that auſpicious day be ever ſacred, no mourning, no miſfortunes happen on it,"—ſince 'tis the day of my freedom—yet, alas! my dear Harriot, how can I rejoice, ſince 'tis, likewiſe, the day on which the ever amiable Durant took his flight and left this country deſolate? Heigh—ho—your friend too accompanied him—where they have bent their courſe heaven knows.

My mother came up this morning, opened my priſon door, but not with the ſame benign aſpect that the angel did Peter's. You are at liberty, miſs, ſaid ſhe; your paramour is gone, rejoicing,

joicing, no doubt, that he has ſo long been freed from your fond impertinence—What! always writing?—Pretty ſcribbler! — may I ſee your performance? By this time, I ſuppoſe, your novel is compleat. I wonder, madam, returned I, that you are not more fond of my company, as, however ſtupid I may be myſelf, I am, certainly, the cauſe of a great deal of wit in you. Don't be pert, cried ſhe, frowning; I was in hopes the little penance you have undergone would have humbled you. I don't know any one but yourſelf that could have looked up, after being detected in making private aſſignations with a fellow, and, what is ſtill more mortifying, to have that fellow leave his love-ſick miſtreſs without beſtowing a thought on her, though he had received ſuch a proof of her fooliſh fondneſs. I was ready

to

to burſt with vexation at this ill-natured ſpeech, but knowing that nothing would give her greater pleaſure, I affected the utmoſt compoſure, and, careleſsly folding up my letter, did not vouchſafe an anſwer.

What an unnatural behaviour is this for a parent, my dear Harriot! but there is no remedy, 'tis fruitleſs then to complain. Adieu, my ſweet friend, I am impatient to hear from you, and you are, I doubt not, greatly ſurpriſed at my long ſilence, but theſe two letters, which I now ſend you, will explain the cauſe. Write immediately as you love

Your,

EMILIA SPENCER.

Miſs HARRIOT FITZROY, *to Miſs* EMILIA SPENCER.

I Was, indeed, my dear Emilia, extreamly uneaſy at not hearing from you, but expecting that happineſs every day, I deferred writing.

I condole with my friend on the diſagreeable treatment ſhe has met with, and more at the departure of Mr. Durant. How can we account for his going without at leaſt attempting to ſee you?—But perhaps he did attempt it—I will not judge raſhly. His friend accompanied him?—Ah, my dear Emilia, what a train of melancholy ideas does the remembrance of that amiable man produce!—But I muſt ſtrive to forget him, it has been my conſtant endeavour ever ſince he

he left me, though I can boaſt of very little ſucceſs. Yet my grief is not ſo violent as it was at firſt, 'tis now rather an agreeable kind of ſadneſs, which is not diſpleaſing.

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Emilia! my dear Emilia! what will become of me? I am out of breath—my ſiſter has juſt left me—Mr. Brandon is coming! Good heavens, I know not but he may be here in an inſtant—his letter informs her that he will be with us almoſt as ſoon as it—I could never be worſe prepared to receive him—what a dreadful meeting will it be!—I die at the thought—yet it is what I might have expected—but my heart—ah, Emilia!—my refractory heart—how ſhall I conquer its weakneſs? Aſſiſt me, heaven! teach me to pay the debt I owe to duty.

My

My ſiſter has been with me again. She chid me for writing, when I ought rather to be putting on my ornaments, to appear amiable in the eyes of my intended huſband.—Huſband!—Ah, Emilia, the lovely Lenox!

My ſiſter is dreſſed out to the beſt advantage. What is her motive, I wonder, for this unuſual finery? Yet 'tis natural enough. Several years are paſt ſince ſhe ſaw Mr. Brandon, and ſhe wiſhes, no doubt, to conceal the change that time has made in her perſon. The deſire of pleaſing is univerſal. She preſſed me to alter my dreſs, but to this, you may believe, I was little inclined; as the only hope I had of liberty, and, conſequently, of retaining my fortune, was the chance of his diſliking me, and for that reaſon freeing me from my engagement.

ment. I, therefore, told her I would ſee him juſt as I was, having no deſire of deceiving him into a better opinion of my perſon than it deſerved. As you pleaſe, ſaid ſhe, but I have ſeen the time, Harriot, when you would not have been ſo indifferent. She left me, and I have been trying to muſter up a little courage to ſee this once wiſhed for, but now dreaded man.

He is come, Emilia, I hear a carriage at the gate.—I ran to the window hardly knowing what I did—I would have looked out, but being ſeized with an unaccountable emotion, and with a kind of terror, haſtily ſtarted back. Could I deſcribe what I now feel—but 'tis impoſſible—and indeed I would ſpare you the knowledge of what would give your ſympathizing heart ſo much pain.

Another meſſenger, one of the maids. She came bouncing into the room, in her hurrying way. Miſs, miſs, cried ſhe, lord bleſs me, madam! why you are not dreſſed yet, and there is Mr. Brandon, all in a fluſter to ſee you—He is the ſweeteſt gentleman! Deadly tall and ſtately. I thought he would have ſtrod over me as I ſtood in the hall, for he walks as upright as a dart, and looks, lord bleſs us! as fierce as an angel.—Come, madam, can I aſſiſt you? No, ſaid I, leave me, I will follow you preſently. Pray do then, miſs, as faſt as you can, for the poor gentleman muſt be fatigued with his journey—and yet, there he ſtands—bolt upright in the parlour, and wont ſit down, I ſuppoſe, till he has paid his love to you. Well, go, cried I, and don't teaſe me.

me. Away ſhe went, and I, all trembling at the horrid deſcription ſhe gave of him, am preparing to follow her. Oh, Emilia!

End of the FIRST VOLUME.